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GERALDINE,

A SEQUEL

TO

COLERIDGE'S CHRISTABEL:

WITH

OTHER POEMS.



BY

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P R E F A C E ,

INCLUDING A SKETCH OF CHRISTABEL.

THE Christabel of Coleridge is a poem of which it is almost impossible to give shortly a fair and perfect abstract. Every word tells; every line is a picture: simple, beautiful, and imaginative, it retains its hold upon the mind by so many delicate feelers and touching points, that to outline harshly the main branches of the tree, would seem to be doing the injustice of neglect to the elegance of its foliage, and the microscopic perfection of every single leaf. Those who now read it for the first time, will scarcely be disposed to assent to so much praise; but the man to whom it is familiar, will remember how it has grown to his own liking, how much of melody, depth, nature, and invention, he has found from time to time hiding in some simple phrase, or unobtrusive epithet. Most gladly, therefore, do I refer my

readers to the *Christabel* itself, however it may tell to the disadvantage of *Geraldine*: at the same time, inasmuch as there may be many to whom the sequel will be obscure, from having had no opportunity of perusing the prior poem, I trust I shall be pardoned, if, in consulting the interest of some of my readers, I mar the fair memory of *Christabel* by a sketch so imperfect, as only to serve the purpose of explaining myself.

The heroine of Coleridge is a 'blue eyed' girl, 'O call her fair, not pale;' and is introduced as 'praying in the midnight wood,' 'beneath the huge oak-tree,' 'for the weal of her lover that's far away.' While thus engaged, she is startled by 'moanings,' and on the 'other side of the oak,' finds 'a damsel bright' 'in sore distress' and 'weariness;' in fact, the dark-eyed *Geraldine*, whose sudden appearance is by herself very suspiciously explained. *Christabel*, 'comforting' her, takes her home to *Langdale-Hall*, the castle of *Sir Leoline*, where the howl of 'the mastiff bitch' seems to bode evil, and some wild expressions addressed by *Geraldine* to *Christabel's* 'guardian spirit,' her dead mother, (who had 'said that she should hear the castle-bell strike twelve upon her [daughter's] wedding day,') gives the first clue to the wicked and supernatural character of *Geraldine*. The maidens now retiring to rest together, the beautiful stranger's 'bosom and half her side,'—'old' 'and cold,' suggest vague

alarms, and 'for an hour' Christabel in 'her arms' is 'dreaming fearfully,'—from which state of terror she is delivered by her guardian mother.

The second part opens with the introduction of Geraldine to Sir Leoline, who recognizes in 'the lofty lady,' the daughter of his once 'friend in youth' 'Roland de Vaux, of Tryermaine,' who had parted from Sir Leoline many years ago 'in disdain and insult.' At her tale, (which I am pleased to consider a fabrication, as also the likeness to Roland's daughter to be a piece of witchcraft,) the Baron is highly indignant, and vows to avenge 'the child of his friend.' Meanwhile, poor Christabel is under a mysterious spell, subjected to 'perplexity of mind,' 'a vision of fear,' and 'snake-like looks' of the rival beauty; albeit 'comforted' by a 'vision blest.' Sir Leoline, glad of the opportunity of a reconciliation to his long-lost friend, sends 'Bracy the bard,' with 'harp' and 'solemn vest,' by 'Irt-(hing) flood,' &c., to Roland's border castle, commissioning him to 'greet Lord Roland,' acquaint him that 'his daughter is safe in Langdale-Hall,' and bidding him 'come' with 'all his numerous array' to meet Sir Leoline 'with his own numerous array' on 'panting palfreys,' and to be friends once more. 'Bard Bracy' hesitates, on account of having dreamt that Christabel—'the dove'—had 'a green snake' 'coiled around its wings and neck,' 'underneath the old tree;' and

having 'vowed' 'with music strong and saintly song,' to exorcise the forest. The Baron interprets it as of 'Lord Roland's beauteous dove,' and when Christabel, who had ever and anon been tortured by 'looks askance' of 'dull and treacherous hate,' entreats him by her 'mother's soul to send away that woman,' he, accounting 'his child' jealous of the radiant stranger, and no doubt alienated by black arts from his daughter, as the lover is afterwards, seems full of wrath, and 'in tones abrupt, austere,' sends the reluctant Bracy on his mission.

Thus far Christabel: for the 'Conclusion to part the second,' however beautiful in itself, is clearly out of place, unless it was intended as a mystification.

And now, on my own portion, I may be permitted to make a few remarks. My excuse for continuing the fragment at all, will be found in Coleridge's own words to the preface of the 1816 pamphlet edition, where he says, 'I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year:' a half-promise, which, I need scarcely observe, has never been redeemed.

In the following attempt I may be censured for rashness, or commended for courage: of course, I am fully aware that to take up the pen where COLERIDGE has laid it down, and that in the wildest and most original of his poems, is a most

difficult, nay, dangerous proceeding; but, upon these very characteristics of difficulty and danger I humbly rely; trusting that, in all proper consideration for the boldness of the experiment, if I be adjudged to fail, the fall of Icarus may be broken, if I be accounted to succeed, the flight of Dædalus may apologize for his presumption.

I deem it due to myself to add what I trust will not be turned against me; viz. that, if not written literally *currente calamo*, GERALDINE has been the pleasant labour of but very few days: also, that until I had just completed it, I did not know of the existence of the proposed solution of Christabel in a recent life of Coleridge, and at that period saw no reason to make any change in mine: and finally, that I should wish to be judged by the whole volume, and not by GERALDINE alone.

M. F. T.

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GERALDINE.



PART I.

GERALDINE.

PART I.

(BEING THE THIRD OF CHRISTABEL.)

It is the wolf, on stealthy prowl,
Hath startled the night with a dismal howl,
It is the raven, whose hoarse croak
Comes like a groan from the sear old oak,
It is the owl, whose curdling screech
Hath peopled with terrors the spectral beech;
For again the clock hath toll'd out twelve,
And sent to their gambols the gnome and the elfe,
And awoken the friar his beads to tell,
And taught the magician the time for his spell,

And to her cauldron hath hurried the witch,
And arous'd the deep bay of the mastiff bitch.

The gibbous moon, all chilling and wan,
Like a sleepless eyeball looketh on,
Like an eyeball of sorrow behind a shroud
Forth looketh she from a torn grey cloud,
Pouring sad radiance on the black air,—
Sun of the night, — what sees she there?

O lonely one, O lovely one,
What dost thou here in the forest dun,
Fair truant, — like an angel of light
Hiding from heaven in deep midnight?
Alas! there is guilt in thy glittering eye
As fearfully dark it looks up to the sky,
Alas! a dull unearthly light
Like a dead star, bluely white,
A seal of sin, I note it now,
Flickers upon thy ghastly brow;
And about the huge old oak
Thickly curls a poisonous smoke,
And terrible shapes with evil names

Are leaping around a circle of flames,
And the tost air whirls, storm-driven,
And the rent earth quakes, charm-riven, —
And — art thou not afraid ?

All dauntless stands the maid
In mystical robe array'd,
And still with flashing eyes
She dares the sorrowful skies,
And to the moon, like one possest,
Hath shown, — O dread ! that face so fair
Should smile above so shrunk a breast,
Haggard and brown, as hangeth there, —
O evil sight ! — wrinkled and old,
The dug of a witch, and clammy cold, —
Where in warm beauty's rarest mould
Is fashioned all the rest ;
O evil sight ! for, by the light
From those large eyes streaming bright,
By thy beauty's wondrous sheen,
Lofty gait and graceful mien,
By that bosom half reveal'd,
Wither'd, and as in death congeal'd,

By the guilt upon thy brow,
Ah! Geraldine, 'tis thou!

Muttering wildy through her set teeth,
She seeketh and stirreth the demons beneath,
And — hist! — the magical mandate is spoken,
The bonds of the spirits of evil are broken,
There is a rush of invisible wings
Amid shrieks, and distant thunderings,
And now one nearer than others is heard
Flapping this way, as a huge seabird,
Or liker the deep-dwelling ravenous shark
Cleaving through the waters dark.

It is the hour, the spell hath power!
Now haste thee, e'er the tempest lour.

Her mouth grows wide, and her face falls in,
And her beautiful brow becomes flat and thin,
And sulphurous flashes blear and singe
That sweetest of eyes with its delicate fringe,
Till, all its loveliness blasted and dead,
The eye of a snake blinks deep in her head;

For raven locks flowing loose and long
Bristles a red mane, stiff and strong,
And sea-green scales are beginning to speck
Her shrunken breasts, and lengthening neck;
The white round arms are sunk in her sides, —
 As when in chrysalis canoe
A may-fly down the river glides,
 Struggling for life and liberty too, —
Her body convulsively twists and twirls.
This way and that it bows and curls,
And now her soft limbs melt into one
Strangely and horribly tapering down,
Till on the burnt grass dimly is seen
A serpent-monster, scaly and green,
Horror! — can this be Geraldine?

Haste, O haste, — 'tis almost past,
The sand is dripping thick and fast;
And distant roars the coming blast.

Swiftly the dragon-maid unroll'd
The burnished strength of each sinewy fold,
And round the old oak trunk with toil
Hath wound and trailed each tortuous coil,

Then with one crush hath splitten and broke
To the hollow black heart of the sear old oak.

The hour is fled, the spell hath sped;
And heavily dropping down as dead,
All in her own beauty drest,
Brightest, softest, loveliest,
Fair faint Geraldine lies on the ground,

Moaning sadly ;

And forth from the oak

In a whirl of thick smoke

Grinning gladly,

Leaps with a hideous howl at a bound
A squat black dwarf of visage grim,
With crutches beside each twisted limb
Half hidden in many a flame-cloured rag, —
It is Ryxa the Hag!

Ho, ho ! what wouldst thou, daughter mine,
Wishes three, or curses nine ?
Wishes three to work thy will,
Or curses nine thy hate to fulfil ?

Ryxa, spite of thy last strong charm,
Some pure spirit saves from harm
Her, who before me was loved too well,
Our holy hated Christabel;
Her who stole my heart from *him*,
One of the guardian cherubim,
Hovers around, and cheers in dreams,
Thwarting from heaven my hell-bought schemes:

Now, — for another five hundred years,

O mother mine, will I be thine,
To writhe in pains, and shriek in fears,
And toil in chains, and waste in tears,
So thy might will scorch and smite

The beautiful face of Christabel,
And will drain by jealous pain

Love from the heart of Christabel,
And her own betrothed knight,
O glad sight! shall scorn and slight

The pale one he hath loved so well,
While in my arms, by stolen charms
And borrowed mien, for Geraldine
He shall forget his Christabel.

It is done, it is done, thy cause is won!

Quoth Ryxa the Hag to Geraldine;
Thus have I prest my seal on thy breast,
Twelve circling scales from a dragon's crest,
And still thy bosom and half thy side
Must shrivel and sink at eventide,
And still, as every Sabbath breaks,
Thy large dark eyes must blink as a snake's.
Now, for mine aid: — De Vaux doth come
To lead his seeming daughter home,
Therefore I fit thee a shape and a face
Differing, yet of twin-born grace,
That all who see thee may fall down
Heart-worshippers before thy throne,
Forgetting in that vision sweet
Thy former tale of dull deceit,
And tranc'd in deep oblivious joy
Bask in bliss without alloy:
He too, thou lovest, in thine arms,
Shall grace the triumph of thy charms,
While thy thirsty rage thou satest
In the woes of her thou hatest.
Yet, daughter, hark! my warning mark!

Hallowed deed, or word or thought,
Is with deadliest peril fraught;
And if, where true lovers meet
Thou hearest hymning wild and sweet,
O stop thine ears, lest all be marr'd, —
Beware, beware of holy bard!
For that the power of hymn and harp
Thine innermost being shall wither and warp,
And the same hour they touch thine ears,
A serpent thou art for a thousand years.

Hush! how heavily droops the night
In sultry silence, calm as death;
Gloomy and hot, and yet no light,
Save where the glowworm wandereth,
For the moon hath stolen by,
Mantled in the stormy sky,
And there is a stillness strange,
An awful stillness, boding change,
As if live nature holds her breath,
And all in agony listeneth
Some terror undefin'd to hear
Coming, coming, coming near!

Hush'd is the beetle's drowsy hum,
And the death-watch's roll on his warning drum,
Hush'd the raven, and screech owl,
And the famishing wolf on his midnight prowling, —
Silent as death.

Hark, hark! he is here, he has come from afar,
The black-rob'd storm in his terrible car;
Vivid the forked light'ning flashes,
Quick behind the thunder crashes,
Clattering hail, a shingly flood,
Rattles like grape-shot in the wood;
And the whole forest is bent one way,
Blowing as slaves to a tyrant's sway,
While the foot of the tempest hath trampled and
broke
Many a stout old elm and oak.

And Geraldine? — O who could tell
That thou who by sweet Christabel
Softly liest in innocent sleep,
Like an infant's calm and deep,

Smiling faintly, as it seems
From thy bright and rosy dreams,
Who could augur thou art she
That around the hollow tree,
With bad charm and hellish rite
Shook the heav'ns, and scar'd the night?

Alas! for gentle Christabel,
Alas! for wasting Christabel;
From evil eye, and powers of hell,
And the strong magic of the spell,
Holy Mary, shield her well!

CONCLUSION TO PART I.

THE murderer's knife is a fearful thing,
But what, were it edg'd with a scorpion's sting?
A dagger of glass hath death in its stroke,
But what, should venom gush out as it broke?
And hatred in a man's deep heart
Festereth there like the barb of a dart,
Maddening the fibres at every beat,
And filling its caverns with fever-heat;
But jealous rage in a woman's soul
Simmers and steams as a poison-bowl:
A drop were death, but the rival maid
Must drain all dry, e'er the passion be staid:
It floodeth the bosom with bitterest gall,
It drowneth the young virtues all,
And the sweet milk of the heart's own fountain,
Chok'd and crush'd by a heavy mountain,
All curdled, and hardened, and blackened, doth
shrink
Into the sepia's stone-bound ink;

The eye of suspicion deep sunk in the head
Shrinks and blinks with malice and dread,
And the cheek without and the heart within
Are blistered and blighted with searing sin,
Till charity's self no more can trace
Aught that is lovely in feature or face,
But the rose-bud is canker'd, and shall not bloom,
Corruption hath scented the rich perfume,
The angel of light is a demon of gloom,
And the bruise on his brow is the seal of his doom.

Ah ! poor unconscious rival maid,
How drearily must thou sicken and fade
In the foul air of that Upas-shade !

Her heart must be tried, and trampled, and torn
With fear, and care, and slander, and scorn ;
Her love must look upon love estranged,
Her eye must meet his eye, how changed,
Her hand must take his hand unpressing,
Her hope must die, without confessing ;
And still she'll strive her love to smother,
While in the triumphs of another

The shadow of her joys departed
Shall scare and haunt her broken-hearted ;
And he, who once lov'd her, his purest, his first,
Must hate her and hold her defil'd and accurst,
Till wasted and desolate, calumny's breath
Must taint with all guilt her innocent death.

END OF PART I.

GERALDINE.

PART II.

PART II.

(BEING THE FOURTH OF CHRISTABEL.)

How fresh and fair is morn !

The dewbeads dropping bright
Each humble flower adorn,

With coronets bedight,
And jewel the rough thorn

With tiny globes of light —
How beautiful is morn !

Her scatter'd gems how bright !

There is a quiet gladness
In the waking earth,
Like the face of sadness

Lit with chasten'd mirth ;

There is a mine of treasure
In those hours of health,
Filling up the measure
Of creation's wealth.

The eye of day hath opened grey,
And the gallant sun
Hath trick'd his beams by Rydal's streams,
And waveless Coniston;
From Langdale Pikes his glory strikes,
From heath and giant hill,
From many a tairn, and stone-built cairn,
And many a mountain rill:
Helvellyn bares his forehead black,
And Eagle-crag, and Saddleback,
And Skiddaw hails the dawning day
And rolls his robe of clouds away.

Ho, warder, ho ! in chivalrous state,
A stranger-knight to the castle gate
With trumpet, and banner, and mailed men,
Comes this way winding up the glen :

His vizor is down, and he will not proclaim
To the challenge within his lineage or name,
Yet by his herald, and esquires eight,
And five-score spearmen, tall and straight,
And blazon rich with bearings rare,
And highbred ease, and noble air,
And golden spurs, and sword, can he be
Nought but a knight of high degree.

Alas ! they had loved too soon, too well,
Young Amador and Christabel ;
Life's dawn beheld them, blythe and bland
Little playmates, hand in hand,
Over fell and field and heather
Wandering innocent together,
Alone in childhood's rosy hours
Straying far to find wild flowers ;
Life's sun above its eastern hill
Saw them inseparable still
In the bower, or by the brook,
Or spelling out the monkish book,
Or as with songs they wont to wake
The echoes on the hill-bound lake,

Or as with tales to while away
The winter's night, or summer's day ;
Life's noon was blazing bright and fair,
To smile upon the same fond pair,
The handsome youth, the beauteous maid,
Together still in sun or shade :
Warmer, good sooth, than wont with friends,
While he supports, and she depends,
As to some dangerous craggy height
They climb with terror and delight,
Nor guess that the strange joy they feel,
The rapture making their hearts reel,
Springs from aught else than — sweet Grasmere,
Or hill and valley far and near,
Or Derwent's banks, and glassy tide,
Lowdore, or hawthorn'd Ambleside :
Nor reckon they what dear danger lies
In gazing on each other's eyes ;
On her bright cheek, fresh and fair,
Blooming in the mountain air,
On his form, and agile limbs,
As from rock to rock he climbs,

Her unstudied natural grace,
 Loosen'd vest and tresses flowing,
Or his fine and manly face
 With delighted ardour glowing.

Thus they grew up in each other,
 Till to ripened youth
They have grown up for each other;
 Yet, to say but sooth,
She had not lov'd him, as other
 Than a sister doth,
And he to her was but a brother,
 With a brother's troth :
But selfish craft, that slept so long,
And, if wrong were, had done the wrong,
Now, just awake, with dull surprise
 Read the strange truth,
And from their own accusing eyes
 Condemned them both, —
That they, who only for each other
 Gladly drew their daily breath,
Now must curb, and check, and smother
 Through all life, love strong as death ;

While the dear hope they just have learnt to prize,
And fondly cherish,
The hope that in their hearts deep-rooted lies,
Must pine and perish :
For the slow prudence of the worldly wise
In cruel coldness still denies
The fondling youth to woo and win
The heiress daughter of Leoline.

And yet how little had he err'd,
That on his ear the bitter word
Of harsh reproach should fall, —
“ Is it then thus, ungrateful boy,
“ Thou wouldst his dearest hope destroy
“ Who lent thee life and all ?
“ Why did I save thee, years ago,
“ Beneath the tottering Bowther-stone
“ An infant weak and wan ?
“ Why did I warm thee on my hearth,
“ Nor crush the viper in its birth,
“ O thou presumptuous one ? ”

They met once more in sweet sad fear
At the old oak-tree in the forest drear,
And, as enamour'd of bitterness, they
Wept the sad hour of parting away.
The bursting tear, the stifled sob,
The tortur'd bosom's first-felt throb,
The fervent vow, the broken gold,
Their hapless hopes too truly told;
For, alas ! till now they never had known
How deep and strong their loves had grown,
But just as they sip the full cup of the heart,
It is dashed from the lip, — and they must part :
Alas ! they had loved, yet never before
The wealth of love had counted o'er,
And just as they find the treasure so great,
It is lost, it is sunk in the billows of fate.

Yea, it must be with a fearful shock
That the pine can be torn from its root-clasp'd
rock,
Or the broad oak-stump as it stands on the
farm
Be rent asunder by strength of arm ;

So, when the cords of love are twin'd
Among the fibres of the mind,
And kindred souls by secret ties
Mingle thoughts and sympathies,
O what a wrench to tear in twain
Those that are lov'd and love again,
To drag the magnet from its pole,
To chain the freedom of the soul,
To freeze in ice desires that boil,
To root the mandrake from the soil
With groans, and blood, and tears, and toil!

He is gone to the land of the holy war,
The sad, the brave young Amador,
Not to return, — by Leoline's oath,
When all in wrath he bound them both,
Not to return, — by that last kiss,
Till name and fame, and fortune are his.
Aye, he is gone : — and with him went,
As into chosen banishment,
The bloom of her cheek, and the light of her eye,
And the hope of her heart, so near to die :

He is gone o'er Paynim lands to roam,
But leaves his heart, his all, at home :
And years have glided, day by day,
To watch him warring far away,
Where, upon Gideon's hallowed banks,
His prowess hath scatter'd the Saracen ranks,
And the Lion-king with his own right hand
Hath dubb'd him knight of Holy Land :
The crescent wan'd where'er he came,
And Christendom rung with his glorious fame,
And Saladin trembled at the name
Of Amador de-Ramothaim.

He hath won him in battle a goodly shield,
Three wild-boars Or on an azure field,
While scallop-shells three on an argent fess
Proclaim him a pilgrim and knight no less ;
Enchased in gold on his hemlet of steel
A deer-hound stands on the high-plumed keel,
Hafiz his hound, who hath rescued his life
From the wily Assassin's secret knife,
Hafiz his friend, whom he loveth so well
As the last gift of Christabel :

And over his vizor, and round his arm,
And grav'd on his sword as a favorite charm,
And on his banner emblazon'd at length,
Love's motto, "HOPE IS ALL MY STRENGTH."

Oh then with how much pride and joy
And hope, which fear could scarce alloy,
With heart how leaping, eye how bright,
And fair cheek flush'd with deep delight,
Heard Christabel the wafted story
Of her far-off lover's glory !

For her inmost soul knew well
That he hoped and spake and thought

Only of his Christabel,
That he liv'd and lov'd and fought

Only for his Christabel :
So she felt his honour her's,
His welfare her's, his being her's,

And did reward with rich largesse
The stray astonish'd messengers
Who brought her so much happiness.

Behold ! it is past, — that many a year ;
The harvest of her hope is near ;
Behold ! it is come, — behold *him* here !
Yes, in pomp and power and pride,
And joy and love how true, how tried,
He comes to claim his long-lov'd bride ;
Her own true knight, O bliss to tell,
Her Amador she loves so well
Returns for his sweet Christabel !

He leapt the moat, the portal past,
He flung him from his horse in haste,
And in the hall
He met her ! — but how pale and wan ! —
He started back, as she upon
His neck would fall ;
He started back, — for by her side
(O blessed vision !) he espied
A thing divine, —
Poor Christabel was lean and white,
But oh, how soft, and fair, and bright,
Was Geraldine !
Fairer and brighter, as he gazes
All celestial beauty blazes

From those glorious eyes,
And Amador no more can brook
The jealous air and peevish look
That in the other lies!

Alas, for wasting Christabel,
Alas, for stricken Christabel, —
How had she long'd to see this day,
And now her all is dash'd away!
How many slow sad years, poor maid,
Had she for this day wept and pray'd,
And now the bitterest tears destroy
That honied hope of cherish'd joy,
For he hath ceas'd, — O withering thought,
With burning anguish fully fraught, —
To love his Christabel!
Her full heart bursts, and she doth fall
Unheeded in her father's hall,
And, oh, the heaviest stroke of all!
By him she loves so well.

O save her, Mary Mother, save!
Let not the damnéd sorceress have

Her evil will ;
O save thine own sweet Christabel,
Thy saint, thine innocent Christabel,
And guard her still !

CONCLUSION TO PART II.

For it doth mark a godlike mind,
Prudence, and power, and truth combin'd,
A rare self-steering moral strength,
To over-love the dreary length
Of ten successive anxious years,
Unwarp'd by hopes, untir'd by fears ;
Still, as every teeming hour
Glides away in sun or shower,
Though the pilgrim foot may range,
The heart at home to feel no change,
But to live and linger on,
Fond and warm and true — to one !

O love like this, in life's young spring,
Is a rare and precious thing ;
A pledge that man hath claims above,
A sister-twin to martyrs' love,
A shooting-star of blessed light
Dropt upon the world's midnight,
A drop of sweet, where all beside
Is bitterest gall in life's dull tide,
One faithful found, where all was lost,
An Abdiel in Satan's host.

To love, unshrinking and unshaken,
Albeit by all but hope forsaken,
To love, through slander, craft and fear,
And fairer faces smiling near,
Through absence, stirring scenes among,
And harrowing silence, suffering long,
Still to love on, — and pray and weep
For that dear one, while others sleep,
To dwell upon each precious word
Which the charm'd ear in whispers heard,
To treasure up a lock of hair,
To watch the heart with jealous care,

To live on a remembered smile,
And still the wearisome days beguile
With rosy sweet imaginings,
And all the soft and sunny things
Look'd and spoken, e'er they parted,
Full of hope, though broken-hearted, —
O there is very virtue here,
Retiring, holy, deep, sincere,
A self-pois'd virtue, working still
To compass good, and combat ill,
Which none but worldlings count earth-born,
And they who know it not, can scorn.

Ah yes, let common sinners jeer,
And Mammon's slaves suspect and sneer,
While each idolator of pelf,
Judging from his gross-hearted self,
Counts Love no purer and no higher
Than the low plot of base desire ; —
Let worldly craft nurse its false dreams
Of happiness, from selfish schemes
By heartless hungry parents plann'd,
Of wedded fortune, rank and land, —

There is more wisdom, and more wealth,
More rank in being, more soul's health,
In wedded love for one short hour,
Than endless wedded pelf and power :
Yes, there is virtue in these things ;
A balm to heal the scorpion-stings
That others' sins and sorrows make
In hearts that still can weep and ache ;
There is a heavenly influence,
A secret spiritual fence,
Circling the soul with present power
In temptation's darkest hour,
Walling it round from outward sin,
While all is soft and pure within.

END OF PART II.

GERALDINE.



PART III.

PART III.

(BEING THE FIFTH AND LAST OF CHRISTABEL.)

HAST thou not seen, world-weary man,
 Life's poor pilgrim white and wan, —
 A gentle beauty for the cheek
 Which nothing gives but sorrow,
 A sweet expression, soft and weak,
 Joy can never borrow ?
 Where lingering on the pale wet face
 The rival tears run their slow race
 Each in its wonted furrow ;
 And patience, eloquently meek,
 From the threaten'd stroke unshrinking,
 In mild boldness can but speak
 The burden of its sadden'd thinking, —

“ Dreary as to-day has been,
“ And sad and cheerless yestereen,
“ ’T will dawn as dark to-morrow ! ”

Desolate-hearted Christabel,
Hapless, hopeless Christabel, —
Nightly tears have dimm’d the lustre
Of thy blue eyes, once so bright,
And, as when dank willows cluster
Weeping over marble rocks,
O’er thy forehead white
Droop thy flaxen locks :
Yet art thou beautiful, poor girl,
As angels in distress,
Yea, comforting the soul, sweet girl,
With thy loveliness ;
For thy beauty’s light subdued
Hath a soothing charm
In sympathy with all things good
That weep for hate and harm ;
And none can ever see unmoved
Thy poor wet face, with sorrow white,
O none have seen, who have not loved
The sadly sweet religious light

That doth with pearly radiance shine
From those sainted eyes of thine !

A trampling of hoofs at the cullice-port,
A hundred horse in the castle-court !
From border-wastes, a weary way,
Through Halegarth wood and Knorren moor,
A mingled numerous array,
On panting palfreys black and grey,
With foam and mud bespattered o'er,
Hastily cross the flooded Irt,
And rich Waswater's beauty skirt,
And Sparkling-Tairn, and rough Scathwaite,
And now that day is dropping late,
Have passed the drawbridge and the gate.

By thy white flowing beard, and reverend mien,
And gilded harp, and chaplet of green,
And milk-white mare in the castle-yard,
Welcome, glad welcome to Bracy the bard !
And, — by thy struggle still to hide
This generous conquest of thy pride,

More than by yon princely train,
And blazon'd banner standing near,
And snorting steed with slacken'd rein,
Hail, O too long a stranger here,
Hail, to Langdale's friendly hall,
Thou noble spirit, most of all,
Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine !

Like aspens tall beside the brook
The stalwarth warriors stood and shook,
And each advancing fear'd to look
Into the other's eye ;
'Tis fifty years ago to-day
Since in disdain and passion they
Had flung each other's love away
With words of insult high :
How had they long'd and pray'd to meet !
But memories cling ; and pride is sweet ;
And — which could be the first to greet
The haply scornful other ?
What if De Vaux were haughty still, —
Or Leoline's unbridled will
Consented not his rankling ill
In charity to smother ?

Their knees give way, their faces are pale,
And loudly beneath the corslets of mail,
Their aged hearts in generous heat
Almost to bursting boil and beat ;
The white lips quiver, the pulses throb,
They stifle and swallow the rising sob, —
And there they stand, faint and unmann'd,
As each holds forth his bare right hand !
Yes, the mail-clad warriors tremble,
All unable to dissemble
Penitence and love confest,
As within each aching breast
The flood of affection grows deeper and stronger
Till they can refrain no longer,
But with, — “ Oh, my long-lost brother ! ” —
To their hearts they clasp each other,
Vowing in the face of heaven
All forgotten and forgiven !

Then the full luxury of grief
That brings the smothered soul relief,
Within them both so fiercely rushed
That from their vanquish'd eyes out-gushed

A tide of tears, as pure and deep
As children, yea as cherubs weep !

Quoth Roland de Vaux to Sir Leoline ;
“ No lady lost can be daughter of mine,
For yestereen at this same hour
My Geraldine sat in her latticed bower,
And merrily marvelled much to hear
She had been found in the forest drear :
Nathless, of thee, old friend, to crave
Once more the love I long to have
E'er yet I drop into the grave,

Behold me here !

I hail'd the rich offer, and hither I sped
Glad to reclaim our friendship fled,
And see that face, — e'er yet it be dead, —

I feel so dear ;

And my old heart danc'd with the joy of a child
When out of school he leaps half-wild
To think he could be reconcil'd.”

“ Thy tale is strange,” quoth Leoline,
“ As thy return is sweet ;

Yet might it please thee, brother mine,
 In knightly sort to greet
This wondrous new-found Geraldine,
For sure she is a thing divine
So bright in her doth beauty shine
 From head to feet,
Yea, sure she is a thing divine,
 For angels meet."

O glorious in thy loveliness !
Victorious in thy loveliness !
From what strong magnetic zone,
Circling some strange world unknown,
Hast thou stolen sweet influence
To lull in bliss each ravished sense ?
That thine eyes rain light and love
Kindlier than the heavens above, —
That the sunshine of thy face
Shows richly ripe each winning grace, —
That thine innocent laughing dimple,
And thy tresses curling simple,
Thy soft cheek, and rounded arm,
And foot unsandalled, white and warm,
And every sweet luxurious charm,

Fair, and full, and flush'd, and bright,
Fascinate the dazzled sight
As with a halo of delight ?

Her beauty hath conquer'd : a sunny smile
Laughs into goodness her seeming guile.
Aye, was she not in mercy sent
To heal the friendships pride had rent ?
Is she not here a blessed saint
To work all good by subtle feint ?
Yea, art thou not, mysterious dame,
Our Lady of Furness ? — the same, the same !
O holy one, we know thee now,
O gracious one, before thee bow,
Help us, Mary, hallowed one,
Bless us, for thy wondrous Son —

The name was half-spoken, — the spell was half
broken, —

And suddenly, from his bent knee
Upleapt each knight in fear,
All warily they look'd around,
Sure, they had heard a hissing sound,

And one quick moment on the ground
Had seen a dragon here !
But now before their wildered eyes
Bright Geraldine, all sweet surprise,
With her fair hands in courteous guise
Hath touch'd them both, and bade them rise ;
Alas, kind sirs, she calmly said,
I am but a poor hunted maid,
Hunted, ah me ! and sore afraid,
That all too far from home have stray'd,
For love of one who flies and hates me,
For hate of one who loves and waits me.

Wonder stricken were they then,
And full of love, those ancient men,
Full-fired with guilty love, as when
In times of old
To young Susannah's fairness knelt
Those elders twain, and foully felt
The lava-streams of passion melt
Their bosoms cold :
They loved, — they started from the floor, —
But, hist ! within the chamber-door

Softly stole Sir Amador;—
Nor look'd, nor wondered as they passed,
(Speeding by in shame and haste,
Meekly thinking of each other
As a weak and guilty brother,)
For all to him in that dark room,
All the light to pierce its gloom,
All he thought of, car'd for, there,
Was that loved one, smiling fair,
Wondrous in her charms divine,
Glad and glorious Geraldine.

The eye of a hawk is fierce and bright
As a facet-cut diamond scattering light,
Soft and rayed with invincible love
As a pure pearl is the eye of a dove;
And so in flashes quick and keen
Look'd Amador on Geraldine,
And so in sweet subduing rays,
On Amador did fondly gaze,
In gentle power of beauty's blaze,
Imperial Geraldine.

His head is cushioned on her breast,
Her dark eyes shed love on his,
And his changing cheek is prest
By her hot and thrilling kiss,
While again from her moist lips
The honeydew of joy he sips,
And views, with rising transport warm,
Her half-unveil'd bewitching form —

A step on the threshold ! — the chamber is dim,
And gliding ghost-like up to him,
While entranced in conscious fear
He feels an injured angel near,
Sad Christabel with wringing hands
Beside her faithless lover stands,
Sad Christabel with streaming eyes
In silent anguish stands and sighs.

Ave, Maria ! send her aid,
Bless, oh bless the wretched maid !

It is done, — he is won ! — stung with remorse
He hath dropt at her feet as a clay-cold corse,

And Christabel with trembling dread
Hath rais'd on her knee his pale dear head,
And bathed his brow with many a tear,
And listened for his breath in fear,
And when she thought that none was near
But guardian saints, and God above,
Set on his lips the seal of her love !

But Geraldine had watch'd that kiss,
And with involuntary hiss,
And malice in her snake-like stare,
She gnashed her teeth on the loving pair
And shed on them both a deadly glare.

Softly through the sounding hall
In rich melodious notes,
With many a gentle swell and fall,
Holy music floats,
Like gossamer in a sultry sky,
Dropping low, or sailing high :
Bard Bracy, bard Bracy, that touch was thine
On Cambria's harp with triple strings,
Wild and sweet is the hymn divine,
Fanning the air like unseen wings ;

Thy hand, good Bracy, thine alone
Can wake so sad, so sweet a tone,
Nought but the magic of thy touch
Can charm so well, and cheer so much,
And wondrously, with strong controul,
Rouse or lull the passive soul.

What aileth thee, O Geraldine?
Why waileth Lady Geraldine?
Thy body convuls'd groweth lank and lean,
Thy smooth white neck is shrivell'd and green,
Thine eyes are blear'd and sunk and keen,
O dreadful ! art *thou* Geraldine ? —

The spell is dead, the charm is o'er,
Writhing and coiling on the floor
Awhile she curl'd in pain, and then was seen no
more.

CONCLUSION TO PART III.

SWEET Christabel, my Christabel,
 I have riven thy heart that loved so well :
 Oh weak, O wicked, to rend in its home
 The love that I cherish wherever I roam !

As when with his glory the morning sun
 Floods on a sudden the tropical sky,
 And startled twilight, dim and dun,
 Flies from the fear of his conquering eye,
 So flash'd across the lighten'd breast
 Of Christabel, no more to moan,
 A dawn of love, the happiest
 Her maiden heart had ever known ;
 For sure it was only through powers of hell,
 And evil eye, and potent spell,
 That Amador to Christabel
 Could faithless prove, —
 And when she saw him kneeling near
 Contrite, yet more in hope than fear,

Oh then she felt him doubly dear,
Her rescued love !

Ave, Maria ! unto thee
All the thanks and glory be,
For thy gracious arm and aid
Saved the youth, and blest the maid.
So falls it out, that vanquish'd ill
Breeds only good to good men still,
And while its poison seethes and works
It yields a healing antidote,
Which, whether mortals use or not,
Like a friend in ambush, lurks
Deepest in the deadliest plot.

Not swift, though soon, next day at noon,—
Just at the wedding-hour
As hand-in-hand betroth'd they stand
Beneath the chapel tower,
A holy light, — a vision bright, —
'T was twelve o'clock at noon,
A spirit good before them stood,
Her garments fair and flowing hair
Shone brighter than the moon.

And thus in musical voice most sweet, —
“ Daughter, this hour to grace and greet,
To bless this day, as is most meet,

Thy mother stoops from heaven :
And, ancient men, who all so late
Have stopp'd at Death's half-opened gate,
In tears of love to drown your hate,

Forgiving and forgiven,
Hear, noble spirits reconcil'd,
Hear, gracious souls, now meek and mild
Albeit with guilt so long defil'd,

Love's lingering boon receive ;
Roland de Vaux, — thy long-lost child,
Whom border-troopers, fierce and wild,
An infant from his home beguil'd,

Thy soul to gall and grieve,
In Amador — behold ! ”

The spirit said, and all in light
Melted away that vision bright :

My tale is told.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

IMAGINATION.

THOU fair enchantress of my willing heart,
Who charimest it to deep and dreamy slumber,
Gilding mine evening clouds of reverie, —
Thou lovely Siren, who, with still small voice
Most softly musical, dost lure me on
O'er the wide sea of indistinct idea,
Or quaking sands of untried theory,
Or ridgy shoals of fixt experiment
That wind a dubious pathway through the deep, —
Imagination, I am thine own child :
Have I not often sat with thee retired,
Alone yet not alone, though grave most glad,

All silent outwardly, but loud within,
As from the distant hum of many waters,
Weaving the tissue of some delicate thought,
And hushing every breath that might have rent
Our web of gossamer, so finely spun?
Have I not often listed thy sweet song,
(While in vague echoes and Æolian notes
The chambers of my heart have answered it,)
With eye as bright in joy, and fluttering pulse,
As the coy village maiden's, when her lover
Whispers his hope to her delighted ear?

And taught by thee, angelic visitant,
Have I not learnt to love the tuneful lyre,
Draining from every chord its musical soul?
Have I not learnt to find in all that is,
Somewhat to touch the heart, or raise the mind,
Somewhat of grand and beautiful to praise
Alike in small and great things? and this power,
This clearing of the eye, this path made straight
Even to the heart's own heart, its innermost core,
This keenness to perceive, and seek and find
And love and prize all-present harmony,

This, more than choosing words to clothe the
thought,
Makes the true poet ; this thy glorious gift,
Imagination, rescues me thy son
(Thy son, albeit least worthy,) from the lust
Of mammon, and the cares of animal life,
And the dull thralldom of this work-day world.

Indulgent lover, I am all thine own ;
What art thou not to me ? — ah, little know
The worshippers of cold reality,
The grosser minds, who most sincerely think
That sense is the broad avenue to bliss,
Little know they the thrilling ecstasy,
The delicate refinement in delight,
That cheers the thoughtful spirit, as it soars
Far above all these petty things of life ;
And strengthened by the flight and cordial joys,
Can then come down to earth and common men
Better in motive, stronger in resolve,
Apt to use all means that compass good,
And of more charitable mind to all.
Imagination, art thou not my friend

In crowds and solitude, my comrade dear,
Brother, and sister, mine own other self,
The Hector to my souls Andromache?

Triumphant beauty, bright intelligence !
The chastened fire of ecstasy suppressed
Beams from thine eye ; because thy secret heart,
Like that strange sight burning yet unconsumed,
Is all on flame a censer filled with odours,
And to my mind, who feel thy fearful power,
Suggesting passive terrors and delights,
A slumbering volcano : thy dark cheek,
Warm and transparent, by its half-formed dimple
Reveals an under-world of wondrous things
Ripe in their richness, — as among the bays
Of blest Bermuda, through the sapphire deep
Ruddy and white fantastically branch
The coral groves : thy broad and sunny brow,
Made fertile by the genial smile of heaven,
Shoots up an hundred fold the glorious crop
Of arabesque ideas ; forth from thy curls
Half hidden in their black luxuriance

The twining sister-graces lightly spring,
The muses, and the passions, and young love,
Tritons and Naiads, Pegasus, and Sphinx,
Atlas, Briareus, Phaeton, and Cyclops,
Centaur, and shapes uncouth, and wild conceits :
And in the midst blazes the star of mind,
Illumining the classic portico
That leads to the high dome where Learning sits :
On either side of that broad sunny brow
Flame-coloured pinions, streaked with gold and blue,
Burst from the teeming brain ; while under them
The forkéd lightning, and the cloud-robed thunder,
And fearful shadows, and unhallowed eyes,
And strange foreboding forms of terrible things
Lurk in the midnight of thy raven locks.

And thou hast been the sunshine to my landscape,
Imagination ; thou hast wreathed me smiles,
And hung them on a statue's marble lips ;
Hast made earth's dullest pebbles bright like gems ;
Hast lent me thine own silken clue, to rove
The ideal labyrinths of a thousand spheres ;

Hast lengthened out my nights with life-long
dreams,
And with glad seeming guilt my darkest day ;
Helped me to scale in thought the walls of heaven
While journeying wearily this busy world ;
Sent me to pierce the palpable clouds with eagles,
And with leviathan the silent deep ;
Hast taught my youthful spirit to expand
Beyond himself, and live in other scenes,
And other times, and among other men ;
Hast bid me cherish, silent and alone,
First feelings, and young hopes, and better aims,
And sensibilities of delicate sort,
Like timorous mimosas, which the breath,
The cold and cautious breath of daily life
Hath not as yet had power to blight and kill
From my heart's garden ; for they stand retired,
Screened from the north by groves of rooted
thought.

Without thine aid, how cheerless were all time,
But chief the short sweet hours of earliest love ;
When the young mind, athirst for happiness,

And all-exulting in that new-found treasure,
The wealth of being loved, as well as loving,
Sees not, and hears not, knows not, thinks not,
speaks not,

Except it be of her, his one desire ;
And thy rose-coloured glass on every scene
With more than earthly promise cheats the eye,
While the charm'd ear drinks thy melodious words,
And the heart reels, drunk with ideal beauty.
So too the memory of departed joy,
Walking in black with sprinkled tears of pearl,
Passes before the mind with look less stern
And foot more lightened, when thine inward power,
Most gentle friend, upon that clouded face
Sheds the fair light of better joy to come,
And throws round Grief the azure scarf of Hope.

As the wild chamois bounds from rock to rock,
Oft on the granite steeples nicely poised,
Unconscious that the cliff from which he hangs
Was once a fiery sea of molten stone,
Shot up ten thousand feet and crystallized

When earth was labouring with her kraken brood ;
So have I sped with thee, my bright-eyed love,
Imagination, over pathless wilds,
Bounding from thought to thought, unmindful of
The fever of my soul that shot them up
And made a ready footing for my speed,
As like the whirlwind I have flown along
Winged with ecstatic mind, and carried away,
Like Ganymede of old, o'er cloudcapt Ida,
Or Alps, or Andes, or the ice-bound shores
Of Arctic or Antarctic, — stolen from earth
Her sister-planets and the twinkling eyes
That watched her from afar, to the pure seat
Of rarest Matter's last created world,
And brilliant halls of self-existing Light.

THE SONG OF AN ALPINE ELF.

HA ha ha ! — My coy Jungfra
Is tall and robed in snow,
Yet at a leap to the cloudy steep
I bound from the glen below ;
On her dizziest peak I sit and shriek
To the winds that around me blow,
And heard from afar is my ha ha ha !
The wild laugh echoes so.

In the forest dun round Lauterbrunn
That line each dark ravine,
I hide me away from the garish day
Till the howling winter's e'en ;

Then I jump on high through the coal-black sky,
And light on some cliff of snow
That nods to its fall like a tottering wall,
And I rock it to and fro'!

My summer's home is the cataract's foam
As it floats in a frothing heap,
My winter's rest is the weasel's nest,
Or deep with the mole I sleep:
I ride for a freak on the lightning-streak,
And mingle among the clouds
My swarthy form with the thunder-storm,
Wrapped in its sable shrouds.

Often I launch the huge avalanche,
And make it my milk-white sledge
When unappall'd to the Grindewald
I slide from the Shrikehorn's edge:
Silent and soft to the ibex oft
I have stolen, and hurried him o'er
The precipice to the bristling ice
That smokes with his scarlet gore.

But my greatest joy is to lure and decoy
To the chasm's slippery brink
The hunter bold, when he's weary and old,
And there let him suddenly sink, —
A thousand feet — dead ! — he dropped like lead,
Ha, he could n't leap like me ;
With broken back, as a felon on rack,
He hangs in a split pine-tree.

And there mid his bones, that echoed with groans,
I make me a nest of his hair ;
The ribs dry and white rattle loud as in spite
When I rock in my cradle there :
Hurrah, hurrah, and ha, ha, ha !
I'm in a merry mood,
For I'm all alone in my palace of bone,
That's tapestried fair with the old man's hair,
And dappled with clots of blood ;
And when I look out all around and about,
The storm shouts high to the coal-black sky,
And the icicle sleet falls thick and fleet,
And all that I hear on the mountains drear
And all I behold in the vallies cold,
Is death and solitude.

DREAMS.

A DREAM — mysterious word, a dream !

What joys and sorrows are enshrin'd
In those still hours we fondly deem
A playtime for the truant mind :

It is a happy thing to dream,

When rosy thoughts and visions bright
Pour on the soul a golden stream
Of rich luxurious delight :

It is a weary thing to dream,

When from the hot and aching brain,
As from a boiling cauldron, steam
The myriad forms in fancy's train.

It is a curious thing to dream,

When shapes grotesque of all quaint things
Like laughing water-witches seem
To sport in reason's turbid springs :

It is a glorious thing to dream,
When full of wings and full of eyes,
Born on the whirlwind or sun-beam,
We race along the startled skies :

It is a wondrous thing to dream
Of tumbling with a fearful shock
From some tall cliff where eagles scream,
— To light upon a feather rock :

It is a terrible thing to dream
Of strangled throats and heart-blood spilt,
And ghosts that in the darkness gleam,
And horrid eyes of midnight guilt.

I love a dream, I dread a dream ;
Sometimes all bright, and full of gladness,
But othertimes my brain will teem
With sights that urge the mind to madness.

INFANT CHRIST, WITH A WREATH OF FLOWERS.

FROM A PICTURE BY CORREGGIO.

YES, — I can fancy, in the spring
Of childhood's sunny hours,
That nature's infant priest and king
Lov'd to gaze on flowers :

For lightly, mid the wreck of all
When torn from Eden's bowers,
Above the billows of the fall
Floated gentle flowers.

Unfallen, sinless, undefil'd,
Fresh bathed in summer showers,
What wonder that the holy child
Lov'd to play with flowers ?

In these he saw his Father's face,
 All Godhead's varied powers,
 And joy'd each attribute to trace
 In sweet unconscious flowers ;

In these he found where Wisdom hides
 And modest Beauty covers,
 And where Omnipotence resides
 And Tenderness,—in flowers.

Innocent child, a little while,
 E'er yet the tempest lours,
 Bask thy young heart in Nature's smile,
 Her lovely smile of flowers ;

Thy young heart,—is it not arrayed
 In feelings such as ours ? —
 Yes, being now of thorns afraid,
 I see thee crowned with flowers.

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

A SAD, sweet gladness, full of tears,
 And thoughts, that never cloy,
 Of careless childhood's happier years,
 Is memory's tranquil joy.

A rapturous and delusive dream
 Of pleasures, ne'er to be,
 That o'er life's troubled waters gleam,
 Is Hope's sweet reverie.

Yet, before Memory can look back,
 When Hope is lost in sight,
 Ah! where is Memory's fairy track,
 Ah! where is Hope's delight?

The present is a weary scene
 And always wish'd away;
 We live on "*to be*," and "*has been*,"
 But never on "*to-day*."

ON A BULBOUS ROOT,

WHICH BLOSSOMED, AFTER HAVING LAIN FOR AGES IN THE
HAND OF AN EGYPTIAN MUMMY.

WHAT, wide awake, sweet stranger, wide awake ?
And laughing coyly at an English sun,
And blessing him with smiles for having thawed
Thine icy chain, for having woke thee gently
From thy long slumber of three thousand years ?
Methinks I see the eye of wonder peering
From thy tall pistil, looking strangely forth
As from a watch-tow'r at thy fellow-flowers,
Admiring much the rich variety
Of many a gem in nature's jewel-case
Unknown to thee, — the drooping hyacinth,
The prim ranunculus, and gay geranium,
And dahlias rare, and hearts-ease of all hues,
Mealy auriculas, and spotted lilies,
Gaudy carnations, and the modest face
Of the moss-rose : methinks thy wondering leaves

And curious petals at the long-lost sun
Gaze with a lingering love, bedizen'd o'er
With a small firmament of eyes to catch
The luxury of his smile ; as o'er the pool
Hovering midway the gorgeous dragon-fly
Watches his mates with thousand-facet vision ;
Or as when underneath the waterfall
Floating in sunny wreaths the fretted foam
Mirrors blue heaven in its million orbs.
Methinks I see thy fair and foreign face
Blush with the glowing ardour of first love,
(Mindful of ancient Nile, and those warm skies,
And tender tales of insect coquetry,) .
When some bright butterfly descends to sip
The exotic fragrance of thy nectarous dew :
Even so, Jabal's daughters in old time
Welcomed the sons of God, who sprang from
 heaven
To gaze with rapture on earth's fairest creatures,
And fan them with their rainbow-coloured wings.

Didst ever dream of such a day as this,
A day of life and sunshine, when entranced

In the cold tomb of yonder shrivelled hand ?
Didst ever try to shoot thy fibres forth
Through thy close prison-bars, those parchment
 fingers,
And strive to blossom in a charnel-house ?
Didst ever struggle to be free, — to leap
From that forced wedlock with a clammy corpse,—
To burst thy bonds asunder, and spring up
A thing of light to commerce with the skies?
Or didst thou rather, with endurance strong,
(That might have taught a Newton passive power,)
Baffle corruption, and live on unharmed
Amid the pestilent steams that wrapped thee
 round,
Like Mithridates, when he would not die,
But conquered poison by his strong resolve?

O life, thy name is mystery, — that couldst
Thus energize inert, be, yet not be,
Concentrating thy powers in one small point ;
Couldst mail a germ, in seeming weakness strong,
And arm it as thy champion against Death ;
Couldst give a weed, dug from the common field,

What Egypt hath not, Immortality ;
Couldst lull it off to sleep ere Carthage was,
And wake it up when Carthage is no more !
It may be, suns and stars that walked the heavens,
While thou wert in thy slumber, gentle flower,
Have sprung from chaos, blazed their age, and
burst :

It may be, that thou seest the world worn out,
And lookst on meadows of a paler green,
Flow'rs of a duskier hue, and all creation
Down to degenerate man more and more dead,
Than in those golden hours, nearest to Eden,
When mother earth and thou and all were young.

And he that held thee, — this bituminous shape,
This fossil shell once tenanted by life,
This chrysalis husk of the poor insect man,
This leathern coat, this carcase of a soul, —
What was thy story, O mine elder brother ?
I note thee now, swathed like a Milanese babe,
But thine are tinctured grave-clothes, fathoms long :
On thy shrunk breast the mystic beetle lies

Commending thee to Earth, and to the Sun
Regenerating all; a curious scroll
Full of strange written lore rests at thy side ;
While a quaint rosary of bestial gods,
Ammon, Bubastes, Thoth, Osiris, Apis,
And Horus with the curl, Typhon and Phthah,
Amulets ciphered with forgotten tongues,
And charm'd religious beads circle thy throat.
Greatly thy children honored thee in death,
And for the light vouchsafed them they did well, —
In that they hoped, and not unwisely hoped,
Again in his own flesh to see their sire ;
And their affection spared not, so the form
They loved in life might rest adorned in death.

But this dry hand, — was it once terrible
When among warrior bands thou wentest forth
With Ramses, or Sesostris, yet again
To crush the rebel Ethiop ? — wast thou set
A taskmaster to toiling Israël
When Cheops or Cephrenes raised to heaven
Their giant sepulchres ? — or did this hand,
That lately held a flow'r, with murderous grasp

Tear from the Hebrew mother her poor babe
To fling it to the crocodile? — or rather
Wert thou some garden-lover, and this bulb
Perchance most rare and fine, prized above gold,
(As in the mad world's dotage yesterday
A tulip-root could fetch a prince's ransom,) —
Was to be buried with thee, as thy praise,
Thy Rosicrucian lamp, thine idol weed? —
Perchance, O kinder thought and better hope,
Some priest of Isis shrined this root with thee
As nature's hieroglyphic, her half-guess
Of glimmering faith, that soul will never die:
What emblem liker, or more eloquent
Of immortality, whether the Sphinx,
Scarab, or circled snake, or wide-winged orb,
The azure-coloured arch, the sleepless eye,
The pyramid four-square, or flowing river,
Or all whatever else were symbols apt
In Egypt's alphabet, — as thou, dry root,
So full of living promise? — yes, I see
Nature's "resurgam" sculptured there in words
That all of every clime may run and read:
I see the better hope of better times,

Hope against hope, wrapped in the dusky coats
Of a poor leek, — I note glad tidings there
Of happier things: this undecaying corpse
A little longer, yet a little longer
Must slumber on, but shall awake at last ;
A little longer, yet a little longer, —
And at the trumpet's voice, shall this dry shape
Start up, instinct with life, the same though changed,
And put on incorruption's glorious garb :
Perchance for second death, — perchance to shine,
If aught of Israel's God he knew and lov'd,
Brighter than seraphs, and beyond the sun.

CRUELTY.

WILL none befriend that poor dumb brute,
Will no man rescue him? —
With weaker effort, grasping, mute,
He strains in every limb;

Spare him, O spare : — he feels, — he feels !
Big tears roll from his eyes ;
Another crushing blow ! — he reels,
Staggers, — and falls, — and dies.

Poor jaded horse, the blood runs cold
Thy guiltless wrongs to see ;
To heav'n, O starv'd one, lame and old,
Thy dim eye pleads for thee.

Thou too, O dog, whose faithful zeal
Fawns on some ruffian grim,
He stripes thy skin with many a weal,
And yet, — thou lovest him.

Shame ! that of all the living chain
That links creation's plan,
There is but one delights in pain,
The savage monarch, — man !

O cruelty, — who could rehearse
Thy million dismal deeds,
Or track the workings of the curse
By which all nature bleeds ?

Thou meanest crime, — thou coward sin,
Thou base, flint-hearted vice, —
Scorpion ! — to sting thy heart within
Thyself shalt all suffice ;

The merciless is doubly curst,
As mercy is “twice blest ;”
Vengeance, though slow, shall come, — but first
The vengeance of the breast.

Why add another woe to life,
Man, — are there not enough ?
Why lay *thy* weapon to the strife ?
Why make the road more rough ?

Faint, hunger-sick, old, blind, and ill,
The poor, or man or beast,
Can battle on with life uphill,
And bear its griefs at least ;

Truly, their cup of gall o'erflows !
But, when the spite of men
Adds poison to the draught of woes,
Who, who can drink it then ?

Heard ye that shriek ? — O wretch, forbear,
Fling down thy bloody knife :
In fear, if not in pity, spare
A woman, and a wife !

For thee she toils, unchiding, mild,
And for thy children wan,
Beaten, and starv'd, — with famine wild,
To feast thee, selfish man :

Husband, and father, drunkard, fiend !

Thy wife's, thy children's moan
Has won for innocence a friend,
Has reach'd thy Judge's throne ;

Their lives thou madest sad ; but worse
Thy deathless doom shall be,
“No MERCY” is the withering curse
Thy Judge has passed on thee :

Heap on, — heap on, fresh torments add, —
New schemes of torture plan,
No MERCY : Mercy's self is glad
To damn the cruel man.

God ! God ! thy whole creation groans,
Thy fair world writhes in pain ;
Shall the dread incense of its moans
Arise to Thee in vain ?

The hollow eye of famine pleads,
The face with weeping pale,
The heart that all in secret bleeds,
The grief that tells no tale,

Oppression's victim, weak and mild,
 Scarce shrinking from the blow,
And the poor wearied factory child,
 Join in the dirge of woe.

O cruel world ! O sickening fear
 Of goad, or knife, or thong ;
O load of evils ill to bear !
 — How long, good God, how long ?

CHILDREN.

HARMLESS, happy little treasures,
Full of truth, and trust, and mirth,
Richest wealth, and purest pleasures,
In this mean and guilty earth,

How I love you, pretty creatures,
Lamb-like flock of little things,
Where the love that lights your features
From the heart in beauty springs :

On these laughing rosy faces
There are no deep lines of sin,
None of passion's dreary traces
That betray the wounds within ;

But yours is the sunny dimple
Radiant with untutor'd smiles,
Yours the heart, sincere and simple,
Innocent of selfish wiles ;

Yours the natural curling tresses,
Prattling tongues, and shyness coy,
Tottering steps, and kind caresses,
Pure with health, and warm with joy.

The dull slaves of gain, or passion,
Cannot love you as they should,
The poor worldly fools of fashion
Would not love you if they could :

Write them childless, those cold-hearted,
Who can scorn Thy generous boon,
And whose souls with fear have smarted,
Lest — Thy blessings come too soon.

While he hath a child to love him
No man can be poor indeed,
While he trusts a Friend above him,
None can sorrow, fear or need.

But for thee, whose hearth is lonely
And unwarmed by children's mirth,
Spite of riches, thou art only
Desolate and poor on earth :

All unkiss'd by innocent beauty,
All unlov'd by guileless heart,
All uncheer'd by sweetest duty,
Childless man, how poor thou art !

SONNET TO MY BOOK,

“PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY;” BEFORE PUBLICATION.

MY soul's own son, dear image of my mind,
 I would not without blessing send thee forth
 Into the bleak wide world, whose voice unkind
 Perchance will mock at thee as nothing worth;
 For the cold critic's jealous eye may find
 In all thy purposed good little but ill,
 May taunt thy simple garb as quaintly wrought,
 And praise thee for no more than the small skill
 Of masquing as thine own another's thought:
 What then? — count envious sneers as less than
 nought:
 Fair is thine aim, and having done thy best,
 Lo, thus I bless thee; yea, thou shalt be blest!

TO THE SAME :

AFTER PUBLICATION.

THAT they have praised thee well, and cheered
thee on

With kinder tones than critics deign to few,
Child of my thoughts, my fancy's favorite son,
Our courteous thanks, our heartfelt thanks are
due.

Despise not thou thine equal's honest praise ;
Yet feast not of such dainties ; thou shalt rue
Their sweetness else ; let rather generous pride
Those golden apples straightly spurn aside,

And gird thee all unshackled to the race :
On to the goal of honour, fair beginner,
A thousand ducats thou shalt yet be winner !

SONNET,

ON THE PUBLICATION OF THE SECOND EDITION OF MY
 "PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY."

YET once again, not after many days
 Since first I dared this voyage in the dark,
 Borne on the prosperous gale of good men's praise
 To the wide waters I commit mine ark,
 And bid God speed thy venture, gallant bark !
 For I have launched thee on a thousand
 prayers,
 Freightied thee well with all my mind and
 heart,
 And if some contraband error unawares
 Like Achan's wedge, lie hid in any part,
 Stand it condemned, as it most justly ought :
 Yet be the thinker spared, if not his thought ;
 For he that with an honest purpose errs
 Merits more kind excuse than the shrewd world
 confers.

MONSIEUR D'ALVERON,

AN INCIDENT, FOUNDED ON FACT.

POOR Monsieur D'Alveron ! I well remember
 The day I visited his ruinous cot,
 And heard the story of his fallen fortunes.
 It was a fine May morning, and the flowers
 Spread their fair faces to the laughing sun,
 And look'd like small terrestrial stars, that beam'd
 With life and joy ; the merry lark was high
 Careering in the heavens, and now and then
 A throstle from the neighboring thicket pour'd
 His musical and hearty orisons.
 The cot too truly told that poverty
 Found it a home with misery and scorn :
 No clambering jessamine, no well-train'd roses
 There lingered, like sweet charity, to hide
 The rents unseemly of the plaster'd wall ;
 No tight trimm'd rows of box, or daisy prim

Mark'd a clean pathway through the miry clay,
But all around was want and cold neglect.
With curious hand, (and heart that beat with warm
Benevolence) — I knock'd, lifted the latch,
And in the language of his mother-land
Besought a welcome ; quick with courteous phrase,
And joy unfeign'd to hear his native tongue,
He bade me enter. — 'T was a ruined hovel ;
Disease and penury had done their worst
To load a wretched exile with despair,
But still with spirit unbroken he liv'd on,
And with a Frenchman's national levity
Bounded elastic from his weight of woes.
I listed long his fond garrulity,
For sympathy and confidence are aye
Each other's echoes, and I won his heart
By pitying his sorrows ; long he told
Of friends, and wife, and darling little ones,
Fortunes, and titles, and long-cherished hopes
By frenzied Revolution marr'd and crush'd :
But oft my patience flicker'd, and my eye
Wander'd inquisitive round the murky room
To see wherein I best might mitigate

The misery my bosom bled to view.
I sat upon his crazy couch, and there
With many sordid rags, a roebuck's skin
Show'd sleek and mottled; swift the clear grey eye
Of the poor sufferer had mark'd my wonder,
And as in simple guise this touching tale
He told me, in the tongue his youth had lov'd,
Many a tear stole down his wrinkled cheek.

“ Yon glossy skin is all that now remains
“ To tell me that the past is not a dream !
“ Oft up my Château's avenue of limes
“ To be caress'd in mine ancestral hall
“ Poor '*Louis*' bounded, (I had called him Louis,
“ Because I lov'd my King;) — my little ones
“ Have on his forkéd antlers often hung
“ Their garlands of spring flowers, and fed him
 with
“ Sweet heads of clover from their tiny hands.
“ But on a sorrowful day a random-shot
“ Of some bold thief, or well-skill'd forester
“ Struck him to death, and many a tear and sob
“ Were the unwritten epitaph upon him.

“ The children would not lose him utterly,
“ But pray’d to have his mottled beautiful skin
“ A rug to their new pony-chaise, that they
“ Might oftener think of their lost favourite.
“ Ay — there it is ! — that precious treasury
“ Of fond remembrances, — that glossy skin !
“ O thou chief solace in the wintry nights
“ That warms my poor old heart, and thaws my
 breast

“ With tears of, — Mais, Monsieur, asseyez vous ! ” —
But I had started up, and turn’d aside
To weep in solitude. —

WISDOM'S WISH.

Ah, might I but escape to some sweet spot,
 Oasis of my hopes, to fancy dear,
 Where rural virtues are not yet forgot,
 And good old customs crown the circling year;
 Where still contented peasants love their lot,
 And trade's vile din offends not nature's ear,
 But hospitable hearths, and welcomes warm
 To country quiet add their social charm;

Some smiling bay of Cambria's happy shore,
 A wooded dingle on a mountain-side,
 Within the distant sound of ocean's roar,
 And looking down on valley fair and wide,
 Nigh to the village church, to please me more
 Than vast cathedrals in their Gothic pride,
 And blest with pious pastor, who has trod
 Himself the way, and leads his flock to God,—

“ There would I dwell, for I delight therein ! ”

Far from the evil ways of evil men,
Untainted by the soil of others' sin,
My own repented of, and clean again :
With health and plenty crown'd, and peace within,
Choice books, and guiltless pleasures of the pen,
And mountain-rambles with a welcome friend,
And dear domestic joys, that never end.

There, from the flowery mead, or shingled shore,
To cull the gems that bounteous nature gave,
From the rent mountain pick the brilliant ore,
Or seek the curious crystal in its cave ;
And learning nature's Master to adore,
Know more of Him who came the lost to save ;
Drink deep the pleasures contemplation gives,
And learn to love the meanest thing that lives.

No envious wish my fellows to excel,
No sordid money-getting cares be mine ;
No low ambition in high state to dwell,
Nor meanly grand among the poor to shine :

But, sweet benevolence, regale me well
With those cheap pleasures and light cares of
thine,
And meek-eyed piety, be always near,
With calm content, and gratitude sincere.

Rescued from cities, and forensic strife,
And walking well with God in nature's eye,
Blest with fair children, and a faithful wife,
Love at my board, and friendship dwelling nigh,
Oh thus to wear away my useful life,
And, when I'm called in rapturous hope to die,
Thus to rob heav'n of all the good I can,
And challenge earth to show a happier man !

THE MOTHER'S LAMENT.

My own little darling — dead !
 The dove of my happiness fled !
 Just Heaven, forgive,
 But let me not live
 Now my poor babe is dead :

No more to my yearning breast
 Shall that sweet mouth be prest,
 No more on my arm
 Nestled up warm
 Shall my fair darling rest :

Alas, for that dear glaz'd eye,
 Why did it dim or die ?
 Those lips so soft
 I have kissed so oft,
 Why are they ice, oh why ?

Alas, little frocks and toys,
Shadows of bygone joys,
 Have I not treasure
 Of bitterest pleasure
In these little frocks and toys?

O harrowing sight to behold
That marble-like face all cold,
 That small cherish'd form
 Flung to the worm,
Deep in the charnel-mould!

Where is each heart-winning way,
Thy prattle, and innocent play?
 Alas, they are gone,
 And left me alone
To weep for them night and day:

Yet why should I linger behind?
Kill me too, — death most kind;
 Where can I go
 To meet thy blow
And my sweet babe to find?

I know it, I rave half-wild !
But who can be calm and mild
 When the deep heart
 Is riven apart
Over a dear dead child ?

I know it, I should not speak
So boldly, — I ought to be meek,
 But love it is strong,
 And my spirit is stung
Lying all numb'd and weak.

TRUST.

“My times are in thy hand.”

YET will I trust ! in all my fears,
Thy mercy, gracious Lord, appears,
To guide me through this vale of tears,

And be my strength ;

Thy mercy guides the ebb and flow
Of health and joy, or pain and woe,
To wean my heart from all below

To Thee at length.

Yes, — welcome pain, — which Thou has sent, —
Yes, — farewell blessings, — Thou hast lent,
With Thee alone I rest content,

For Thou art Heav'n, —

My trust reposes, safe and still,
On the wise goodness of Thy will,
Grateful for earthly good — or ill,

Which Thou hast giv'n.

O blessed friend ! O blissful thought !
With happiest consolation fraught, —
Trust Thee I may, I will, I ought, —
To doubt were sin ;

Then let whatever storms arise,
Their Ruler sits above the skies,
And lifting unto Him mine eyes,
'Tis calm within.

Danger may threaten, foes molest,
Poverty brood, disease infest,
Yea, torn affections wound the breast
For one sad hour,
But faith looks to her home on high,
Hope casts around a cheerful eye,
And love puts all the terrors by
With gladdening power.

FLOWERS.

WILT thou gaze with me on flowers,
 And let their sparkling eyes
 Glancing brightly up to ours
 Teach us to be wise ?

The pale narcissus tells of youth
 Nurtured in purity and truth ;
 Violets on the moss-bank green,
 Of sweet benevolence unseen ;
 A rose is blooming charity ;
 A snow-drop, fair humility ;
 Yon golden crocus, smiling sweetly,
 Smiles, alas, to perish fleetly ;
 That hyacinth, with cluster'd bells,
 Of sympathy in sorrow tells ;
 This young mimosa, as it trembles,
 Affection's thrilling heart resembles ;

And the glazed myrtle's fragrant bloom
Hints at a life that mocks the tomb.

What is a flower? a beauteous gem
Set in nature's diadem,
A sunbeam o'er her tresses flung,
A word from her poetic tongue,
A silent burst of eloquence,
A plaything of Omnipotence; —
The poet's eye sees much in these,
To learn, and love, and praise, and please.

WEDDING-GIFTS.

YOUNG bride, — a wreath for thee !
Of sweet and gentle flowers ;
For wedded love was pure and free
In Eden's happy bowers.

Young bride, — a song for thee !
A song of joyous measure,
For thy cup of hope shall be
Fill'd with honied pleasure.

Young bride, — a tear for thee !
A tear in all thy gladness ;
For thy young heart shall not see
Joy unmixed with sadness.

Young bride,— a smile for thee !

To shine away thy sorrow,

For heaven is kind to-day, and we

Will hope as well to-morrow.

Young bride,— a prayer for thee !

That all thy hopes possessing,

Thy soul may praise her God, and he

May crown thee with his blessing.

MARRIAGE.

It is most genial to a soul refined
 When love can smile, unblushing, unconceal'd,
 When mutual thoughts, and words and acts are
 kind,
 And inmost hopes and feelings are reveal'd,
 When interest, duty, trust, together bind,
 And the heart's deep affections are unseal'd,
 When for each other live the kindred pair, —
 Here is indeed a picture passing fair !

Hail, happy state ! which few have heart to sing,
 Because they feel how faintly words express
 So kind, and dear, and chaste, and sweet a thing
 As tried affection's lasting tenderness ; —
 Yet stop, my venturous muse, and fold thy wing,
 Nor to a shrine so sacred rudely press ;
 For, marriage, — thine is still a silent boast,
 “ Like beauty unadorned, adorned the most.”

A GLIMPSE OF PARADISE.

Nor many rays of heaven's unfallen sun
Reach the dull distance of this world of ours,
Nor oft dispel its shadows cold and dun,
Nor oft with glory tint its faded flowers :
But, oh, if ever yet there wandered *one*,
Like Peri from her amaranthine bowers,
Or ministering angel, sent to bless,
'T was to thy hearth, domestic happiness,
Where in the sunshine of a peaceful home
Love's choicest roses bud, and burst, and bloom,
And bleeding hearts, lull'd in a holy calm,
Bathe their deep wounds in Gilead's healing balm.

A DEBT OF LOVE.

THOU, more than all endeared to this glad heart

By gentle smiles, and patience under pain,

I bless my God, and thee, for all thou art,

My crowning joy, my richest earthly gain!

To thee is due this tributary strain

For all the well-observed kind offices

That spring spontaneous from a heart, imbued

With the sweet wish of living but to please ;

Due for thy liberal hand, thy frugal mind,

Thy pitying eye, thy voice for ever kind,

For tenderness, truth, confidence, — all these :

My heaven-blest vine, that hast thy tendrils

twin'd

Round one who loves thee, though his strain be

rude,

Accept thy best reward, — thy husband's gratitude.

TO LITTLE ELLIN.

My precious babe, my guileless little girl, —

The soft sweet beauty of thy cherub face
Is smiling on me, radiant as a pearl

With young intelligence, and infant grace :
And must the wintry breath of life efface
Thy purity, fair snow-drop of the spring !

Must evil taint thee, — must the world enthrall
Thine innocent mind, poor harmless little thing ?

Ah, yes ! thou too must taste the cup of woe,
Thy heart must learn to grieve, as others do,
Thy soul must feel life's many-pointed sting :

But fear not, darling child, for well I know
Whatever cares may meet thee, ills befall,
Thy God, — thy father's God, — shall lead thee safe
through all.

ON THE BIRTH OF LITTLE MARY.

Lo, Thou hast crowned me with another blessing,
 Into my lot hast dropt one mercy more ; —
All good, all kind, all wise in Thee possessing,
 My cup, O bounteous Giver, runneth o'er,
And still thy princely hand doth without ceasing
 pour :

For the sweet fruit of undecaying love
 Clusters in beauty round my cottage door,
And this new little one, like Noah's dove,
 Comes to mine ark with peace, and plenty for my
 store.

O happy home, O bright and cheerful hearth !
 Look round with me, my lover, friend, and wife,
 On these fair faces we have lit with life,
And in the perfect blessing of their birth,
Help me to live our thanks for so much heaven on
 earth.

DAYS GONE BY.

THOUGH we charge to-day with fleetness,
 Though we dread to-morrow's sky,
There's a melancholy sweetness
 In the name of days gone by :

Yes, though Time has laid his finger
 On them, still with streaming eye
There are spots where I can linger
 Sacred to the days gone by.

Oft as memory's glance is ranging
 Over scenes that cannot die,
Then I feel that all is changing,
 Then I weep the days gone by :

Sorrowful should I be, and lonely,
 Were not all the same as I,
'Tis for all, not my lot only,
 To lament the days gone by.

Cease, fond heart, — to thee are given
Hopes of better things on high,
There is still a coming heaven
Brighter than the days gone by;

Faith lifts off the sable curtain
Hiding huge eternity,
Hope accounts her prize as certain,
And forgets the days gone by,

Love in grateful adoration
Bids distrust and sorrow fly,
And with glad anticipation
Calms regret for days gone by.

THE CRISIS.

HUSH — O heaven ! a moment more,
A breath, a step, and all is o'er ;
Hark — beneath the waters wild !
Save, O mercy, save my child.

Swiftly from her heaving breast
The mother tore the snowy vest, —
Her little truant saw and smil'd,
Turn'd, — and mercy saved the child.

Thus, the face of love can win
Where fear is weak to scare from sin,
Thus, when faith and conscience slept,
Jesus look'd, — and Peter wept.

CHARITY.

FAIR charity, thou rarest, best, and brightest !

Who would not gladly hide thee in his heart
 With all thine angel guests ? for thou delightest
 To bring such with thee, — guests that ne'er de-
 part ;

Cherub, with what enticement thou invitest,
 Perfect in winning beauty as thou art,
 World-wearied man to plant thee in his bosom
 And graft upon his cares thy balmy blossom.

Fain would he be frank-hearted, generous, cheerful,
 Forgiving, aiding, loving, trusting ALL, —
 But knowledge of his kind has made him fearful
 All are not friends, whom friends he longs to call ;
 For prudence makes men cold, and misery tearful,
 And interest bids them rise upon his fall,

And while they seek their selfish own to cherish,
They leave the wounded stag alone to perish.

Man may rejoice that thy sweet influence hallows

His intercourse with all he loves — in heaven ;
But canst thou make him love his sordid fellows,
Nor mix with them untainted by their leaven ?
How can he not grow cautious, cold, and callous,
When he forgives to seventy-times seven,
And still-repeated wrongs, unwept for, harden
The heart that's never sued nor sought to pardon ?

Reserve's cold breath has chilled each warmer feeling,

Ingratitude has frozen up his blood,
Unjust neglect has pierced him, past all healing,
And scarred a heart that panted to do good ;
Slowly, but surely, has distrust been steeling
His mind, much wronged, and little understood ;
Would charity unseal affection's fountain ?
Alas ! tis crushed beneath a marble mountain.

Yet the belief that he was loved by other
 Could root and hurl that mountain in the sea,
Oblivion's depth the height of ill would smother
 And all forgiven, all forgotten be ;
Man then could love his once injurious brother
 With such a love as none can give but he ;
The sun of love, and that alone has power
To bring to bright perfection love's sweet flower.

Soft rains, and zephyrs, and warm noons can van-
 quish

 The stubborn tyranny of winter's frost ;
Once more the smiling valleys cease to languish,
 Drest out in fresher beauties than they lost :
So springs with gladness from its bed of anguish
 The heart that lov'd not, when reviled and crost,
For, though case-hardened by ill-usage, often
Love's sunny smile the rockiest heart will soften.

SONNET

TO THE UNDYING SPIRIT OF
FREDERICK KLOPSTOCK.

(The allusions herein are to expressions contained in his letters.)

IMMORTAL mind, so bright with beautiful thought,
And robed so fair in loveliest sympathy,
“Thou Christian,” by thy “guardian angel” taught
The master-touches of all melody,
Am not I “one of those” unworthy, sought
By thy rapt soul with “love’s prospective eye?”
I feel I love thee, “brother,” as I ought, —
Look down and love me too, where’er thou art :
I too am cherish’d by as kind a heart
As beat in “gentle Cidli’s” breast divine,
I too can bless the hand which made her mine ;
And within me, congenial feelings dart,
Whether to glow, or thrill, or hope, or melt,
My soul attuned to thine can feel as thou hast felt.

THE FORSAKEN.

I THOUGHT him still sincere,
 I hoped he lov'd me yet ;
 My poor heart pants with harrowing fear, —
 O canst thou thus forget ?

I gaz'd into his face
 And scann'd his features o'er,
 And there was still each manly grace
 That won my love before ;

But coldly look'd those eyes
 Which oft had thrill'd my breast,
 He was too great, too rich, too wise,
 To make me his confest.

Couldst *thou* know what I felt
 To see thee light and gay,
 Thy frozen heart would warm and melt,
 And weep its ice away :

Yes, *I* can tell of tears

These eyes for thee have shed,
In daily, nightly, hourly, pray'rs
For blessings on thy head.

I name thee not, through shame

That truth should fade and flee :
Fear not, — thy love, thy vows, thy name
Are known to none but me.

Farewell ! 'tis mine to prove

Of blighted hopes the pain ;
But, O believe, I ne'er can love,
As I have lov'd, again :

Farewell ! 't is thine to change,

Forget, be false, be free ;
But know, wherever thou shalt range,
That none can love like me.

THE STAMMERER'S COMPLAINT.

Al! think it not a light calamity
To be denied free converse with my kind,
To be debarred from man's true attribute,
The proper glorious privilege of Speech.
Hast ever seen an eagle chain'd to earth?
A restless panther in his cage immured?
A swift trout by the wily fisher checked?
A wild bird hopeless strain its broken wing?
Hast ever felt, at the dark dead of night,
Some undefined and horrid incubus
Press down the very soul, — and paralyse
The limbs in their imaginary flight
From shadowy terrors in unhallowed sleep?
Hast ever known the sudden icy chill
Of dreary disappointment, as it dashes
The sweet cup of anticipated bliss
From the parched lips of long-enduring hope?

Then thou canst picture, — aye, in sober truth,
In real, unexaggerated truth, —
The constant, galling, festering chain that binds
Captive my mute interpreter of thought ;
The seal of lead enstamp'd upon my lips,
The load of iron on my labouring chest,
The mocking demon that at every step
Haunts me, — and spurs me on — to burst with
 silence !

Oh ! ' tis a sore affliction to restrain,
From mere necessity, the glowing thought ;
To feel the fluent cataract of speech
Check'd by some wintry spell, and frozen up,
Just as it's leaping from the precipice !
To be the butt of wordy captious fools,
And see the sneering self-complacent smile
Of victory on their lips, when I might prove,
(But for some little word I dare not utter,)
That innate truth is not a specious lie :
To hear foul slander blast an honour'd name,
Yet breathe no fact to drive the fiend away :
To mark neglected virtue in the dust,
Yet have no word to pity or console :

To feel just indignation swell my breast,
Yet know the fountain of my wrath is sealed :
To see my fellow-mortals hurrying on
Down the steep cliff of crime, down to perdition,
Yet have no voice to warn, — no voice to win !

'Tis to be mortified in every point,
Baffled at every turn of life, for want
Of that most common privilege of man,
The merest drug of gorged society,
Words, — windy words.

And is it not in truth,
A poison'd sting in every social joy,
A thorn that rankles in the writhing flesh,
A drop of gall in each domestic sweet,
An irritating petty misery,
That I can never look on one I love,
And speak the fullness of my burning thoughts ?
That I can never with unmingled joy
Meet a long-loved and long-expected friend,
Because I feel, but cannot vent my feelings, —
Because I know I ought, — but must not speak,

Because I mark his quick impatient eye
Striving in kindness to anticipate
The word of welcome, strangled in its birth!
Is it not sorrow, while I truly love
Sweet social converse, to be forced to shun
The happy circle, from a nervous sense,
An agonizing poignant consciousness
That I must stand aloof, nor mingle with
The wise and good, in rational argument,
The young in brilliant quickness of reply,
Friendship's ingenuous interchange of mind,
Affection's open-hearted sympathies,
But feel myself an isolated being,
A very wilderness of widow'd thought!

Aye, 't is a bitter thing, — and not less bitter
Because it is not reckoned in the ills,
“The thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to;”
Yet the full ocean is but countless drops,
And misery is an aggregate of tears,
And life, replete with small annoyances,
Is but one long protracted scene of sorrow.

I scarce would wonder, if a godless man,
(I name not him whose hope is heavenward,)
A man, whom lying vanities hath scath'd
And harden'd from all fear, — if such an one
By this tyrannical Argus goaded on
Were to be wearied of his very life,
And daily, hourly foiled in social converse,
By the slow simmering of disappointment
Become a sour'd and apathetic being,
Were to feel rapture at the approach of death,
And long for his dark hope, — annihilation.

BENEVOLENCE.

“It is more blessed to give, than to receive.”

THERE is indeed one crowning joy,
 A pleasure that can never cloy,
 The bliss of doing good ;
 And to it a reward is given
 Most precious in the sight of heaven,
 The tear of gratitude.

To raise the fallen from the dust,
 To right the poor by judgment just,
 The broken heart to heal,
 Pour on the soul a stream as bright
 Of satisfying deep delight
 As happy spirits feel :

Yes, high archangels wing their way
 Far from the golden founts of day
 To scenes of earthly sadness,

That they may comfort the distress'd, —
And feel in blessing, deeply blest,
In gladd'ning, full of gladness.

The choicest happiness there is,
Godhead's essential perfect bliss,
Is born of doing good ;
He looks around, and sees the eye
Of all creation spangled by
The tear of gratitude !

All hail, my country's noble sons,
Ye generous and unselfish ones,
Who foreign shores have trod,
Smit with the love of doing good, —
O that my portion with you stood !
For ye are like your God.

And lives there one, who never felt
His heart with zeal or kindness melt,
Nor ever shed a tear
Of sympathy for other's woe ?
If such a man exist below
A fiend in flesh is here.

Brethren, unsatisfied with earth,
Who heave a sigh 'mid all your mirth,
 And feel it empty joy,
Ye may, — there only wants the will, —
Your dearest hope of bliss fulfil,
 Of bliss without alloy :

Most glad a thing it is and sweet,
To sit, and learn at Wisdom's feet,
 And hear her dulcet voice ;
First in her comforts to be glad,
And then to comfort other sad,
 And teach them to rejoice :

How sweet it is to link again
Estranged affection's broken chain,
 And sooth the tortured breast ;
To be the favoured one that may
Recal to love hearts torn away,
 And thus by both be blest.

Rich men and proud, who fain would find
Some new indulgence for the mind,
 Some scheme to gladden self,

If ye will feed the famish'd poor,
Happiness shall ye buy, far more
 Than with a world of pelf:

Ye cannot see the tearful eye,
Ye cannot hear the grateful sigh,
 Nor feel yourselves belov'd
By the pale children of distress
Whom ye have been the gods to bless, —
 With hearts unthrilled, unmoved.

And you, who love your fellow-men,
And feel a sacred transport, when
 Ye can that love fulfil, —
Go, rescue yonder tortured brute,
Its gratitude indeed is mute,
 But, oh! it loves you still.

Children of science, who delight
To track out wisdom's beauty bright
 In earth, or sea, or sky, —
While nature's lovely face you scan,
Go, seek and save some erring man,
 And set his hope on high.

But still reflect that all the good
Ye do, demands your gratitude,
 For 't is a heavenly boon,
That should for its own sake be sought,
Though to itself is kindly brought
 A blessing sweet and soon :

It is reward to imitate,
In comforting the desolate,
 That gracious One who stood
A ransom for a ruined world,
And still, himself to ruin hurl'd,
 Found evil for his good.

And what an argument for pray'r
Hath yearning mercy written there,
 For if indeed "to give
Is blessed rather than the gift" —
Go thou, to heaven the voice uplift,
 And then thou must receive.

A CABINET OF FOSSILS.

COME, and behold with curious eye
 These records of a world gone by,
 These tell-tales of the youth of time, —
 When changes, sudden, vast, sublime,
 (From chaos, and fair order's birth,
 To the last flood that drowned the earth, —)
 Shattered the crust of this young world,
 Into the seas its mountains hurl'd,
 And upon boisterous surges strong
 Bore the broad ruins far along
 To pave old ocean's shingly bed,
 While bursting upwards in their stead
 The lowest granites towering rose
 To pierce the clouds with crested snows.
 Where future Apennine or Alp
 Bared to high heav'n its icy scalp.

Look on these coins of kingdoms old,
 These medals of a broken mould;

These corals in the green hill-side,
These fruits and flowers beneath the tide,
These struggling flies, in amber found,
These huge pine-forests underground,
These flint sea-eggs, with curious bosses,
These fibred ferns, and fruited mosses
Lying as in water spread,
And stone-struck by some Gorgon's head.
The chambers of this graceful shell,
So delicately formed, — so well,
None can declare what years have past
Since life hath tenanted it last,
What countless centuries have flown
Since age hath made the shell a stone :
Gaze with me on those jointed stems,
A living plant of starry gems,
And on that sea-flower, light and fair,
Which shoots its leaves in agate there ;
Behold these giant ribs in stone
Of mighty monsters, long unknown,
That in some antemundane flood
Wallow'd on continents of mud,
A lizard race, but well for man,
Dead long before his day began,

Monsters, through providence extinct,
That crocodiles to fishes link'd ;
And shreds of other forms beside
That sported in the yeasty tide,
Or flapping far with dragon-wing
On the slow tortoise wont to spring,
Or ambush'd in the rushes rank
Watch'd the dull mammoth on the bank,
Or lov'd the green and silent deep,
Or on the coral-bank to sleep,
Where many a rood, in passive strength,
The scaly reptiles lay at length.

For there are wonders, wondrous strange,
To those who will through nature range,
And use the mind, and clear the eye,
And let instruction not pass by :
There are deep thoughts of tranquil joy
For those who thus their hearts employ,
And trace the wise design that lurks
In holy nature's meanest works,
And by the torch of truth discern
The happy lessons good men learn :

O there are pleasures, sweet and new,
To those who thus creation view,
And as on this wide world they look,
Regard it as one mighty book,
Inscrib'd within, before, behind,
With workings of the Master-mind ;
Ray'd with that wisdom, which excels
In framing worlds, — or fretting shells, —
Filled with that mercy, which delights
In blessing men, — or guiding mites, —
With silent deep benevolence,
With hidden mild Omnipotence,
With order's everlasting laws,
With seen effect, and secret cause,
Justice and truth in all things rife,
Filling the world with love and life,
And teaching from creation round
How good the God of all is found,
His handiwork how vast, how kind,
How prearrang'd by clearest mind,
How glorious in his own estate,
And in his smallest works, how GREAT !

THE MAST OF THE VICTORY.

A BALLAD ; FOUNDED ON AN ANECDOTE HERE DETAILED.

PART I.

NINE years the good ship's gallant mast
 Encountered storm and battle,
 Stood firm and fast against the blast,
 And grape-shots' iron rattle :

And still, though lightning, ball, and pike,
 Had stricken oft, and scor'd her,
 The Victory could never strike, —
 For Nelson was aboard her !

High in the air waved proudly there
 Old England's flag of glory, —
 While see ! below the broad decks flow,
 With streaming slaughter gory ;

Each thundering gun is robed in dun,
That broadside was a beauty, —
Hip, hip, hurrah ! the battle's won,
Hip, hip, hurrah ! each man has done
This day a sailor's duty.

But, woesome lot ! a coward shot
Struck Nelson as he vanquish'd,
And Britain in her griefs forgot
Her glories, where her son was not, —
Her lion-heart was anguish'd.

For hit at last, against that mast
The hero faintly lying,
Felt the cold breath of nearing death,
And knew that he was dying.

PART II.

And past is many a weary day,
Since that dark glorious hour,
And half the mast was stow'd away
In Windsor's royal tower ;

But three feet good of that old wood
 So scarr'd in war, and rotten,
Was thrown aside, unknown its pride,
 In honours all forgotten ;

When, as in shade the block was laid,
 Two robins, perching on it,
Thought that place best to build a nest,
 They plann'd it, and have done it ;

The splinter'd spot which lodg'd a shot
 Is lined with moss and feather,
And chirping loud, a callow brood
 Are nestling up together ;

How full of bliss, — how peaceful is
 That spot the soft nest caging,
Where war's alarms, and blood-stained arms
 Were once around it raging !

And so in sooth it is a truth
 That where the heart is stricken,
Sweeter at last, for perils past
 That us'd the soul to sicken,

Comes a soft calm, with healing balm
Where sorrow deeply smarted,
And peace with strength is sent at length
To bless the broken-hearted.

AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE SOULS OF BRUTES.

“INCERTUS ERRO PER LOCA DEVIA.”—HOR.

ARE these then made in vain ? is man alone
Of all the marvels of creative love
Blest with a scintillation of His essence,
The heavenly spark of reasonable soul ?
And hath not yon sagacious dog, that finds
A meaning in the shepherd's idiot face,
Or the huge elephant, that lends his strength
To drag the stranded galley to the shore,
And strives with emulative pride to excel
The mindless crowd of slaves that toil beside him,
Or the young generous war-horse, when he sniffs
The distant field of blood, and quick and shrill
Neighing for joy, instils a desperate courage
Into the veteran trooper's quailing heart, —

Have they not all an evidence of soul
(Of soul, the proper attribute of man,)
The same in kind, though meaner in degree ?
Why should not that which hath been,—be for ever ?
And death,— O can it be annihilation ?
No,— though the stolid atheist fondly clings
To that last hope, how kindred to despair ;
No,— 't is the struggling spirit's hour of joy,
The glad emancipation of the soul,
The moment when the cumbrous fetters drop,
And the bright spirit wings its way to heaven !

To say that God annihilated aught
Were to declare that in an unwise hour
He plann'd and made somewhat superfluous :
Why should not the mysterious life, that dwells
In reptiles as in man, and shows itself
In memory, gratitude, love, hate, and pride,
Still energize, and be, though death may crush
Yon frugal ant, or thoughtless butterfly,
Or with the simoom's pestilential gale
Strike down the patient camel in the desert ?

There is one chain of intellectual soul,
In many links and various grades, throughout
The scale of nature ; from the climax bright
The first great Cause of all, Spirit supreme,
Incomprehensible, and unconfin'd,
To high archangels blazing near the throne,
Seraphim, cherubim, virtues, aids, and powers,
All capable of perfection in their kind ; —
To man, as holy from his Maker's hand
He stood, in possible excellence complete,
(Man, who is destin'd now to brighter glories,
As nearer to the present God, in One
His Lord and substitute, — than angels reach ;)
Then man as fall'n, with every varied shade
Of character and capability,
From him who reads his title to the skies,
Or grasps with giant-mind all nature's wonders,
Down to the monster shaped in human form,
Murderer, slaving fool, or blood-stained savage ;
Then to the prudent elephant, the dog
Half-humaniz'd, the docile Arab horse,
The social beaver, and contriving fox,
The parrot, quick in pertinent reply,

The kind-affectioned seal, and patriot bee,
The merchant-storing ant, and wintering swallow,
With all those other palpable emanations
And energies of one eternal mind
Prevading and instructing all that live,
Down to the sentient grass, and shrinking clay.
In truth, I see not why the breath of life,
Thus omnipresent and upholding all,
Should not return to Him, and be immortal,
(I dare not say the same) in some glad state
Originally destin'd for creation,
As well from brutish bodies, as from man.
The uncertain glimmer of analogy
Suggests the thought, and reason's shrewder guess;
Yet revelation whispers nought but this,
"Our Father careth when a sparrow dies,"
And that "the spirit of a brute descends"
As to some secret and preserving Hades.

But for some better life, in what strange sort
Were justice, mixed with mercy, dealt to these? —
Innocent slaves of sordid guilty man,
Poor unthank'd drudges, toiling to his will,

Pampered in youth, and haply starv'd in age,
Obedient, faithful, gentle, though the spur
Wantonly cruel, or unsparing thong
Weal your gall'd hides, or your strain'd sinews crack
Beneath the crushing load, — what recompence
Can He who gave you being render you
If in the rank full harvest of your griefs
Ye sink annihilated, to the shame
Of government unequal? — In that day
When crime is sentenc'd, shall the cruel heart
Boast uncondemn'd, because no tortured brute
Stands there accusing? shall the embodied deeds
Of man not follow him, nor the rescued fly
Bear its kind witness to the saving hand?
Shall the mild Brahmin stand in equal sin
Regarding nature's menials, with the wretch
Who flays the moaning Abyssinian ox,
Or roasts the living bird, or flogs to death
The famishing pointer? — and must these again,
These poor unguilty uncomplaining victims
Have no reward for life with its sharp pains? —
They have my suffrage: Nineveh was spared,

Though Jonah prophesied its doom, for sake
Of six-score thousand infants, and “much cattle;”
And space is wide enough, for every grain
Of the broad sands that curb our swelling seas
Each separate in its sphere to stand apart
As far as sun from sun : there lacks not room,
Nor time, nor care, where all is infinite :
And still I doubt : it is a Gordian knot,
A dark deep riddle, rich with curious thoughts ;
Yet hear me tell a trivial incident,
And draw thine own conclusion from my tale.

Paris kept holiday ; a merrier sight
The crowded Champs Elysées never saw :
Loud pealing laughter, songs, and flageolets
And giddy dances 'neath the shadowing elms,
Green vistas throng'd with thoughtless multitudes,
Traitorous processions, frivolous pursuits,
And pleasures full of sin, — the loud “hurra !”
And fierce enthusiastic “Vive la nation !” —
Were these thy ways and works, O godlike man,
Monopolist of mind, great patentee
Of truth, and sense, and reasonable soul ? —

My heart was sick with gaiety ; nor less,
When (sad, sad contrast to the sensual scene)
I marked a single hearse through the dense crowd
Move on its noiseless melancholy way :
The blazing sun half quench'd it with his beams,
And show'd it but more sorrowful : I gaz'd,
And gaz'd with wonder that no feeling heart,
No solitary man followed to note
The spot where poor mortality must sleep :
Alas ! it was a friendless child of sorrow,
That stole unheeded to the house of Death !
My heart beat strong with sympathy, and loath'd
The noisy follies that were buzzing round me,
And I resolv'd to watch him to his grave,
And give a man his fellow-sinner's tear :
I left the laughing crowd, and quickly gain'd
That dreary hearse, and found, — he was not friend-
less !

Yes, there was one, one only, faithful found
To that forgotten wanderer, — *his dog* !
And there, with measured step, and drooping head,
And tearful eye, paced on the stricken mourner.
Yes, I remember how my bosom ached.

To see its sensible face look up to mine
As in confiding sympathy, — and howl :
Yes, I can never forget what grief unfeign'd,
What true love, and unselfish gratitude,
That poor, bereav'd, and *soulless* dog betray'd.

Ah, give me, give me such a friend, I cried ;
Yon myriad fools and knaves in human guise
Compar'd with thee, poor cur, are vain and worth-
less,

While man, who claims a soul exclusively,
Is sham'd by yonder “ mere machine, ” — a dog !

—— “EQUIDEM CREDO QUIA SIT DIVINITUS ILLIS INGENIUM.”
VIRG.

THE CHAMOIS-HUNTER.

A LESSON OF LIFE.

THE scene was bathed in beauty rare,
 For Alpine grandeur toppled there,
 With emerald spots between,
 A summer-evening's blush of rose
 All faintly warmed the crested snows
 And tinged the vallies green ;

Night gloom'd apace, and dark on high
 The thousand banners of the sky
 Their awful width unfurl'd,
 Veiling Mont Blanc's majestic brow,
 That seem'd among its cloud-wrapt snow,
 The ghost of some dead world :

When Pierre the hunter cheerly went
To scale the Catton's battlement
 Before the peep of day ;
He took his rifle, pole, and rope,
His heart and eyes alight with hope,
 He hasted on his way.

He cross'd the vale, he hurried on,
He forded the cold Arveron,
 The first rough terrace gain'd,
Threaded the fir-wood's gloomy belt,
And trod the snows that never melt,
 And to the summit strained.

Over the top, as he knew well,
Beyond the glacier in the dell
 A herd of chamois slept,
So down the other dreary side,
With cautious tread, or careless slide,
 He bounded, or he crept.

And now he nears the chasmed ice ;
He stoops to leap, — and in a trice,

His foot hath slipp'd, — O heaven !
He hath leapt in, and down he falls
Between those blue tremendous walls,
Standing asunder riven.

But quick his clutching nervous grasp
Contrives a jutting crag to clasp,
And thus he hangs in air ; —
O moment of exulting bliss !
Yet hope so nearly hopeless is
Twin-brother to despair.

He look'd beneath, — a horrible doom !
Some thousand yards of deepening gloom,
Where he must drop to die !
He look'd above, and many a rood
Upright the frozen ramparts stood
Around a speck of sky.

Fifteen long dreadful hours he hung,
And often by strong breezes swung
His fainting body twists,
Scarce can he cling one moment more,

His half-dead hands are ice, and sore
His burning bursting wrists ;

His head grows dizzy, — he must drop,
He half resolves, — but stop, O stop,
Hold on to the last spasm,
Never in life give up your hope, —
Behold, behold a friendly rope
Is dropping down the chasm !

They call thee, Pierre, — see, see them here,
Thy gathered neighbours far and near,
Be cool, man, hold on fast :
And so from out that terrible place,
With death's pale paint upon his face
They drew him up at last.

And he came home an altered man,
For many harrowing terrors ran
Through his poor heart that day ;
He thought how all through life, though young,
Upon a thread, a hair, he hung,
Over a gulf midway :

He thought what fear it were to fall
Into the pit that swallows all,
 Unwing'd with hope and love;
And when the succour came at last,
O then he learnt how firm and fast,
 Was his best Friend above.

NATURE.

I STRAYED at evening to a sylvan scene
Dimpling with nature's smile the stern old mountain,
A shady dingle, quiet, cool, and green,
Where the moss'd rock poured forth its natural fountain,
And hazels clustered there, with fern between
And feathery meadow-sweet shed perfume round,
And the pink crocus pierc'd the jewelled ground;
Then was I calm and happy : for the voice
Of nightingales unseen in tremulous lays
Taught me with innocent gladness to rejoice,
And tuned my spirit to unformal praise :
So among silvered moths, and closing flowers,
Gambolling hares, and rooks returning home,
And strong wing'd chafers setting out to roam,
In careless peace I passed the soothing hours.

ART.

THE massy fane of architecture olden,
Or fretted minarets of marble white,
Or Moorish arabesque, begemm'd and golden,
Or porcelain Pagoda, tipp'd with light,
Or high-spann'd arches,—were a noble sight:
Nor less yon gallant ship, that treads the waves
In a triumphant silence of delight,
Like some huge swan with its fair wings unfurl'd,
Whose curv'd sides the laughing water laves,
Bearing it buoyant o'er the liquid world:
Nor less yon silken monster of the sky
Around whose wicker car the clouds are curl'd,
Helping undaunted man to scale on high
Nearer the sun than eagles dare to fly;—
Thy trophies these,—still but a modest part
Of thy grand conquests, wonder-working Art.

CHEERFULNESS.

AN INVOCATION.

COME to my heart of hearts, thou radiant face !

So shall I gaze forever on thy fairness ;

Thine eyes are smiling stars, and holy grace

Blossoms thy cheek with its exotic rareness,

Trelissing it with jasmin-woven lace :

Come, laughing maid, — yet in thy laughter calm,

Be this thy home,

Fair cherub, come,

Solace my days with thy luxurious balm,

And hover o'er my nightly couch, sweet dove,

So shall I live in joy, by living in thy love !

MALICE.

A DEPRECATION.

WHITE Devil! turn from me thy louring eye,
Let thy lean lips unlearn their bitter smile,
Down thine own throat I force its still-born lie,
And teach thee to digest it in thy bile, —
But I will merrily mock at thee the while :
Such venom cannot harm me ; for I sit
On a fair hill of name, and power, and purse,
Too high for any shaft of thine to hit,
Beyond the petty reaching of thy curse,
Strong in good purpose, praise, and pregnant wit :
Husband thy hate for toads of thine own level,
I breathe an atmosphere too rare for thee :
Back to thy trencher at the witches' revel,
Too long they wait thy goodly company :
Yet know thou this, — I'll crush thee, sorry devil,
If ever again thou wag thy tongue at me.

THE HAPPY HOME.

O NAME for comfort, refuge, hope, and peace,
O spot by gratitude and memory blest !
Where as in brighter worlds "the wicked cease
From troubling, and the weary are at rest,"
And unfledg'd loves and graces have their nest :
How brightly here the various virtues shine,
And nothing said or done is seen amiss ;
While sweet affections every heart entwine,
And differing tastes and talents all unite,
Like hues prismatic blending into white,
In charity to man, and love divine :
Thou little kingdom of serene delight,
Heaven's nursery and foretaste ! O what bliss
Where earth to wearied men can give a home like this.

THE WRETCHED HOME.

SCENE of disunion, bickering, and strife,

What curse has made thy native blessings die?

Why do these broils embitter daily life,

And cold self-interest form the strongest tie?

Hate, ill conceal'd, is flashing from the eye,

And mutter'd vengeance curls the pallid lip;

What should be harmony is all at jar; —

Doubt and reserve love's timid blossoms nip,

And weaken nature's bonds to ropes of sand;

While dull indifference takes the icy hand

(Oh chilling touch!) — of constrained fellowship:

What secret demon has such discord fann'd?

What ill committed stirs this penal war, —

Or what omitted good? — Alas! that such things are.

THEORY.

How fair and facile seems that upland road,
Surely the mountain air is fresh and sweet,
And briskly shall I bear this mortal load
With well-brac'd sinews, and unwearied feet;
How dear my fellow-pilgrims oft to meet
O'ertaken, as to reach yon blest abode
We strive together, in glad hope to greet,
With angel friends and our approving God,
All that in life we once have lov'd so well,
So that we lov'd be worthy: her bright wings
My willing spirit plumes, and upward springs
Rejoicing, over crag, and fen, and fell,
And down, or up, the cliff's precipitous face,
To run or fly her buoyant happy race!

PRACTICE.

THIS body,— O the body of this death !

Strive as thou wilt, do all that mortal can,

This is the sum, a man is but a man,

And weak in error strangely wandereth

Down flowery lanes, with pain and peril fraught,

Conscious of what he doth, and what he ought.

Alas, — but wherefore ? — scarce my plaintive breath

Wafts its faint question to the listening sky,

When thus in answer some kind spirit saith ;

“ Man, thou art mean, altho’ thine aim be high ;

“ All matter hath one law, concentrating strong

“ To some attractive point, — and thy world’s core

“ Is the foul seat of hell, and pain, and wrong :

“ Yet courage, man ! the strife shall soon be o’er,

“ And that poor leprous husk sore travailing long,

“ Shall yet cast off its death in second birth,

“ And flame anew a heavenly centred earth !”

RICHES.

HEAPS upon heaps, — hillocks of yellow gold,
Jewels, and hanging silks, and piled-up plate,
And marble groups in beauty's choicest mould,
And viands rare, and odours delicate,
And art and nature, in divinest works,
Swell the full pomp of my triumphant state
With all that makes a mortal glad and great;
— Ah no, not glad; within my secret heart
The dreadful knowledge, like a death-worm lurks,
That all this dream of life must soon depart;
And the hot curse of talents misapplied
Blisters my conscience with its burning smart,
So that I long to fling my wealth aside:
For my poor soul, when its rich mate hath died,
Must lie with Dives, spoiled of all its pride.

POVERTY.

THE sun is bright and glad, but not for me,
My heart is dead to all but pain and sorrow,
Nor care nor hope have I in all I see,
Save from the fear that I may starve to-morrow;
And eagerly I seek uncertain toil,
Leaving my sinews in the thankless furrow,
To drain a scanty pittance from the soil,
While my life's lamp burns dim for lack of oil.
Alas, for you, poor famishing patient wife,
And pale-faced little ones! your feeble cries
Torture my soul: worse than a blank is life
Beggar'd of all that makes that life a prize:
Yet one thing cheers me,—is not life the door
To that rich world where no one can be poor?

LIGHT.

A GLORIOUS vision: as I walk'd at noon

The children of the sun came thronging round me,
In shining robes and diamond-studded shoon;

And they did wing me up with them, and soon,

In a bright dome of wondrous width I found me,
Set all with beautiful eyes, whose wizard rays,

Shed on my soul, in strong enchantment bound me;
And so I look'd and look'd with dazzled gaze,

Until my spirit drank in so much light
That I grew like the sons of that glad place,

Transparent, lovely, pure, serene, and bright;
Then did they call me brother: and there grew

Swift from my sides broad pinions gold and white,
And with that happy flock a brilliant thing I flew!

DARKNESS.

A TERRIBLE dream : I lay at dead of night

Tortured by some vague fear ; it seem'd at first
Like a small ink-spot on the ceiling white,

To a black bubble swelling in my sight,

And then it grew to a balloon, and burst ;

Then was I drown'd, as with an ebon stream,

And those dark waves quench'd all mine inward
light,

That in my saturated mind no gleam

Remain'd of beauty, peace, or love, or right :

I was a spirit of darkness ! — yet I knew

I could not thus be left ; it was but a dream ;

Still felt I full of horror ; for a crew

Of shadowy irts hemmed-in my harried mind,

And all my dread was waking mad and blind.

POETRY.

To touch the heart, and make its pulses thrill,
To raise and purify the grovelling soul,
To warm with generous heat the selfish will,
To conquer passion with a mild controul,
And the whole man with nobler thoughts to fill,
These are thine aims, O pure unearthly power,
These are thine influences; and therefore those
Whose wings are clogged with evil, are thy foes,
And therefore these, who have thee for their dower,
The widowed spirits with no portion here,
Eat angels' food, the manna thou dost shower:
For thine are pleasures, deep, and tried, and true,
Whether to read, or write, or think, or hear,
By the gross million spurn'd, and fed on by the few.

PROSE.

THAT the fine edge of intellect is dulled
And mortal ken with cloudy films obscure,
And the numb'd heart so deep in stupor lulled
That virtue's self is weak its love to lure,
But pride and lust keep all the gates secure,
This is thy fall, O man ; and therefore those
Whose aims are earthly, like pedestrian prose,
The selfish, useful, money-making plan,
Cold language of the desk, or quibbling bar,
Where in hard matter sinks ideal man :
Still, worldly teacher, be it from me far
Thy darkness to confound with yon bright band
Poetic all, though not so named by men,
Who have swayed royally the mighty pen,
And now as kings in prose on fame's clear summit
stand.

FRIENDSHIP, CONSTRAINED.

GENTLE, but generous, modest, pure, and learned,
Ready to hear the fool, or teach the wise,
With gracious heart that all within him burned
To wipe the tears from virtue's blessed eyes
And help again the struggling right to rise,
Such an one, like a god, have I discerned
Walking in goodness this polluted earth,
And cannot choose but love him: to my soul,
Swayed irresistibly with sweet controul,
So rare and noble seems thy precious worth,
That the young fibres of my happier heart,
Like tendrils to the sun, are stretching forth
To twine around thy fragrant excellence,
O child of love; — so dear to me thou art,
So coveted by me thy good influence!

ENMITY, COMPELLED.

COARSE, vain, and vulgar, ignorant, and mean,
Sensual and sordid in each hope and aim,
Selfish in appetite, and basely keen
In tracking out gross pleasure's guilty game
With eager eye, and bad heart all on flame,
Such an one, like an Afreet, have I seen
Shedding o'er this fair world his balefire light,
And can I love him? — far be from my thought
To show not such the charities I ought, —
But from his converse should I reap delight,
Nor bid the tender sproutings of my mind
Shrink from his evil, as from bane and blight,
Nor back upon themselves my feelings roll? —
O moral monster, loveless and unkind,
Thou art as wormwood to my secret soul!

PHILANTHROPIC.

COME near me, friends and brothers ; hem me round
With the dear faces of my fellow-men,
The music of your tongues with magic sound
Shall cheer my heart and make me happiest then ;
My soul yearns over you : the sitting hen
Cowers not more fondly o'er her callow brood
Than in most kind excuse of all your ill,
My heart is warm and patient for your good ;
O that my power were measured by my will ;
Then would I bless you as I love you still,
Forgiving, as I trust to be forgiven :
Here, vilest of my kind, take hand and heart,
I also am a man — 'tis all thou art,
An erring needy pensioner of heaven.

MISANTHROPIC.

How long am I to smell this tainted air,
And in a pest-house draw my daily breath, —
Where nothing but the sordid fear of death
Restrains from grander guilt than cowards dare ?
O loathsome, despicable, petty race,
Low counterfeits of devils, villanous men,
Sooner than learn to love a human face,
I'll make my home in the hyæna's den,
Or live with newts and bull-frogs on the fen :
These at least are honest ; — but for man,
The best will cheat and use you if he can ;
The best is only varnished o'er with good ;
Subtle for self, for damning mammon keen,
Cruel, luxurious, treacherous, proud and mean, —
Great Justice, haste to crush the viper's brood :
And I too am — a man ! — O wretched fate
To be the thing I scorn — more than I hate.

COUNTRY.

MOST tranquil, innocent, and happy life,

Full of the holy joy chaste nature yields,
Redeem'd from care, and sin, and the hot strife
That rings around the smok'd unwholesome dome

Where mighty Mammon his black sceptre wields,—
Here let me rest in humble cottage home,

Here let me labour in the enamell'd fields :
How pleasant in these ancient woods to roam
With kind-eyed friend, or kindly-teaching book ;

Or the fresh gallop on the dew-dropt heath,
Or at fair eventide with feathered hook
To strike the swift trout in the shallow brook,

Or in the bower to twine the jasmin wreath,
Or at the earliest blush of summer morn

To trim the bed, or turn the new-mown hay,
Or pick the perfum'd hop, or reap the golden corn !

So should my peaceful life all smoothly glide away.

TOWN.

ENOUGH of lanes, and trees, and valleys green,
Enough of briary wood, and hot chalk-down,
I hate the startling quiet of the scene,
And long to hear the gay glad hum of town :
My garden be the garden of the Graces,
Flow'rs full of smiles, with fashion for their queen,
My pleasant fields be crowds of joyous faces,
The brilliant rout, the concert, and the ball, —
These be my joys in endless carnival !
For I do loathe that sickening solitude,
That childish hunting-up of flies and weeds,
Or worse, the company of rustics rude,
Whose only hopes are bound in clods and seeds :
Out on it ! let me live in town delight,
And for your tedious country-mornings bright
Give me gay London with its noon and night.

WORLDLY AND WEALTHY.

Idolator of gold, I love thee not,
The orbits of our hearts are sphered afar,
In lieu of tuneful sympathies, I wot,
My thoughts and thine are all at utter jar,
Because thou judgest by what men have got,
Heeding but lightly what they do, or are :
Alas, for thee ! this lust of gold shall mar,
Like leprous stains, the tissue of thy lot,
And drain the natural moisture from thy heart ;
Alas ! thou reckest not how poor thou art,
Weigh'd in the balances of truth, how vain :
O wrecking mariner, fling out thy freight,
Or founder with the heavily sinking weight ;
No longer dote upon thy treasured gain,
Or quick, and sure to come, the hour shall be,
When MENE TEKEL shall be sentenced thee.

WISE AND WORTHY.

RATHER be thou my counsellor and friend,

Good man though poor, whose treasure with thy
heart

Is stored and set upon that better part,
Choice of thy wisdom, without waste or end,
And full of profits that to pleasures tend :

How cheerful is thy face, how glad thou art !
Using the world with all its bounteous store

Of richest blessings, comforts, loves, and joys,
Which thine all-healthy hunger prizeth more

Than the gorg'd fool whom sinful surfeit cloy ;
Still, not forgetful of thy nobler self,

The breath divine within thee, — but with care
Cherishing the faint spark that glimmereth there,
Nor by Brazilian slavery to pelf

Plunging thy taper into poison'd air.

LIBERALITY.

GIVE while thou canst, it is a godlike thing,

Give what thou canst, thou shalt not find it loss,
Yea, sell and give, much gain such barteries bring,

Yea, all thou hast, and get fine gold for dross :
Still, see thou scatter wisely ; for to fling

Good seed on rocks, or sands, or thorny ground,
Were not to copy Him, whose generous cross

Hath this poor world with rich salvation crown'd.

And, when thou look'st on woes and want
around,

Knowing that God hath lent thee all thy wealth,

That better it is to give than to receive,
That riches cannot buy thee joy nor health,—

Why hinder thine own welfare ? thousands grieve

Whom if thy pitying hand will but relieve,

It shall for thine own wear the robe of gladness
weave.

MEANNESS.

WHERE vice is virtue, thou art still despis'd,
O petty loathsome love of hoarded pelf,
Ev'n in the pit where all things vile are priz'd,
Still is there found in Lucifer himself
Spirit enough to hate thee, sordid thing:
Thank Heav'n! I own in thee nor lot nor part;
And though to many a sin and folly cling
The worse weak fibres of my weedy heart,
Yet to thy withered lips and snake-like eye
My warmest welcome is, Depart, depart,
For to my sense so foul and base thou art
I would not stoop to thee to reach the sky:
Aroint thee, filching hand, and heart of stone!
Be this thy doom, with conscience left alone
Learn how like death thou art, unsated selfish one.

ANCIENT.

My sympathies are all with times of old,
I cannot live with things of yesterday,
Upstart, and flippant, foolish, weak, and gay,
But spirits cast in a severer mould,
Of solid worth, like elemental gold :
I love to wander o'er the shadowy past,
Dreaming of dynasties long swept away,
And seem to find myself almost the last
Of a time-honoured race, decaying fast :
For I can dote upon the rare antique,
Conjuring up what story it might tell,
The bronze, or bead, or coin, or quaint relique ;
And in a desert could delight to dwell
Among vast ruins, — 'Tadmor's stately halls,
Old Egypt's giant fanes, or Babel's mouldering walls.

MODERN.

BEHOLD, I stand upon a speck of earth,
To work the works allotted me, — and die,
Glad among toils to snatch a little mirth,
And, when I must, unmurmuring down to lie
In the same soil that gave me food and birth :
For all that went before me, what care I ?
The past, the future, — these are but a dream ;
I want the tangible good of present worth,
And heed not wisps of light that dance and gleam
Over the marshes of the foolish past :
We are a race the best, because the last,
Improving all, and happier day by day
To think our chosen lot hath not been cast
In those old puerile times, discreetly swept away.

SPIRIT.

THROW me from this tall cliff,—my wings are strong,
The hurricane is raging fierce and high,
My spirit pants, and all in heat I long
To struggle upward to a purer sky,
And tread the clouds above me rolling by ;
Lo, thus into the buoyant air I leap
Confident, and exulting, at a bound,
Swifter than whirlwinds, happily to sweep
On fiery wing the reeling world around :
Off with my fetters ! — who shall hold me back ?
My path lies there, — the lightning's sudden track,
O'er the blue concave of the fathomless deep, —
Thus can I spurn matter, and space, and time,
Soaring above the universe sublime.

MATTER.

IN the deep clay of yonder sluggish flood

The huge behemoth makes his ancient lair,

And with slow caution heavily wallows there,

Moving above the stream, a mound of mud!

And near him stretching to the river's edge

In dense dark grandeur, stands the silent wood,

Whose unpierced jungles, choked with rotting
sedge,

Prison the damp air from the freshening breeze:

Lo! the rhinoceros comes down this way

Thundering furiously on, — and snorting sees

The harmless monster at his awkward play,

And rushes on him from the crashing trees, —

A dreadful shock as when the Titans hurl'd

Against high Jove the Himalayan world.

LIFE.

O LIFE, O glorious ! sister-twin of light,
Essence of Godhead, energizing love,
Hail, gentle conqueror of dead cold night,
Hail, on the waters kindly-brooding dove !
I feel thee near me, in me : thy strange might
Flies through my bones like fire,—my heart
beats high
With thy glad presence : pain and fear and care
Hide from the lightning laughter of mine eye,
No dark unseasonable terrors dare
Disturb me, revelling in the luxury,
The new-found luxury of life and health,
This blithesome elasticity of limb,
This pleasure, in which all my senses swim,
This deep outpouring of a creature's wealth !

DEATH.

GHASTLY and weak, O dreadful monarch Death,
With failing feet I near thy silent realm,
Upon my brain strikes chill thine icy breath,
My fluttering heart thy terrors overwhelm.
Thou sullen pilot of life's crazy bark,
How treacherously thou puttest down the helm
Just where smooth eddies hide the sunken rock;
While close behind follows the hungry shark
Snuffing his meal from far, swift with black fin
The foam dividing,—ha ! that sudden shock
Splits my frail skiff; upon the billows dark
A drowning wretch awhile struggling I float,
Till, just as I had hoped the wreck to win,
I feel thy bony fingers clutch my throat.

ELLEN GRAY.

THE EXCUSE OF AN UNFORTUNATE.

A STARLESS night, and bitter cold ;
The low dun clouds all wildly roll'd
 Scudding before the blast,
And cheerlessly the frozen sleet
Adown the melancholy street
 Swept onward thick and fast ;

When crouched at an unfriendly door,
Faint, sick, and miserably poor,
 A silent woman sate,
She might be young, and had been fair,
But from her eye look'd out despair,
 All dim and desolate.

Was I to pass her coldly by,
Leaving her there to pine and die,
 The live-long freezing night?
The secret answer of my heart
Told me I had not done my part
 In flinging her a mite ;

She look'd her thanks, — then droop'd her head ;
“ Have you no friend, no home ? ” I said :
 “ Get up poor creature, come,
“ You seem unhappy, faint, and weak,
“ How can I serve or save you, — speak,
 “ Or whither help you home ? ”

“ Alas, kind sir, poor Ellen Gray
“ Has had no friend this many a day,
 “ And, but that you seem kind, —
“ She has not found the face of late
“ That look'd on her in aught but hate,
 “ And still despairs to find :

“ And for a home, — would I had none !
“ The home I have, a wicked one,

“ They will not let me in,
“ Till I can fee my jailor’s hands
“ With the vile tribute she demands,
“ The wages of my sin :

“ I see your goodness on me frown ;
“ Yet hear the veriest wretch on town,
“ While yet in life she may,
“ Tell the sad story of her grief,—
“ Though heav’n alone can bring relief
“ To guilty Ellen Gray.

“ My mother died when I was born :
“ And I was flung, a babe forlorn,
“ Upon the work-house floor ;
“ My father, — would I knew him not !
“ A squalid thief, a reckless sot,
“ — I dare not tell you more.

“ And I was bound an infant-slave,
“ With no one near to love, or save
“ From cruel sordid men,

“ A friendless, famish’d factory child,
 “ Morn, noon, and night I toil’d and toil’d, —
 “ Yet was I happy then ;

“ My heart was pure, my cheek was fair,
 “ Ah, would to God a cancer there
 “ Had eaten out its way !
 “ For soon my tasker, dreaded man,
 “ With treacherous wiles and arts began
 “ To mark me for his prey.

“ And month by month he vainly strove
 “ To light the flame of lawless love
 “ In my most loathing breast ;
 “ Oh, how I fear’d and hated him,
 “ So basely kind, so smoothly grim,
 “ My terror, and my pest !

“ Till one day, at that prison-mill, —

*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
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“Thenceforward droop’d my stricken head;

“I liv’d,—I died, a life of dread,

“Lest they should guess my shame;

“But weeks and months would pass away,

“And all too soon the bitter day

“Of wrath and ruin came;

“I could not hide my alter’d form:

“Then on my head the fearful storm

“Of jibe and insult burst:

“Men only mocked me for my fate,

“But women’s scorn and women’s hate

“Me, their poor sister, curst.

“O woman, had thy kindless face

“But gentler look’d on my disgrace,

“And heal’d the wounds it gave!—

“I was a drowning sinking wretch,

“Whom no one lov’d enough to stretch

“A finger out to save.

“They tore my baby from my heart,

“And lock’d it in some hole apart

“Where I could hear its cry,

“ Such was the horrid poor-house law ; —

“ Its little throes I never saw,

“ Although I heard it die !

“ Still the stone hearts that ruled the place

“ Let me not kiss my darling’s face,

“ My little darling dead ;

“ O I was mad with rage and hate,

“ And yet all sullenly I sate,

“ And not a word I said.

“ I would not stay, I could not bear

“ To breathe the same infected air

“ That kill’d my precious child ;

“ I watched my time, and fled away

“ The livelong night, the livelong day,

“ With fear and anguish wild :

“ Till down upon a river’s bank,

“ Twenty leagues off, fainting, I sank,

“ And only long’d to die ;

“ I had no hope, no home, no friend,
“ No God! — I sought but for an end
“ To life and misery.

“ Ah, lightly heed the righteous few,
“ How little to themselves is due,
“ But all things given to them ;
“ Yet the unwise, because untaught,
“ The wandering sheep, because unsought,
“ They heartlessly condemn :

“ And little can the untempted dream,
“ While gliding smoothly on life’s stream
“ They keep the letter-laws,
“ What they would be, if, tost like me
“ Hopeless upon life’s barren sea,
“ They knew how hunger gnaws.

“ I was half-starved, I tried in vain
“ To get me work my bread to gain ;
“ Before me flew my shame ;
“ Cold Charity put up her purse,
“ And none look’d on me but to curse
“ The child of evil fame.

“ Alas, why need I count by links
“ The heavy lengthening chain that sinks
 “ My heart, my soul, my all ?
“ I still was fair, though hope was dead,
“ And so I sold myself for bread,
 “ And lived upon my fall :

“ Now was I reckless, bold and bad,
“ My love was hate, — I grew half-mad
 “ With thinking on my wrongs ;
“ Disease, and pain, and giant-sin
“ Rent body and soul, and rag’d within !
 “ Such need to guilt belongs.

“ And what I was, — such still am I ;
“ Afraid to live, unfit to die, —
 “ And yet I hoped I might
“ Meet my best friend and lover — Death
“ In the fierce frowns and frozen breath
 “ Of this December night.

“ My tale is told : my heart grows cold ;
“ I cannot stir, — yet, — kind good sir,

“ I know that you will stay, —
“ And God is kinder e’en than you, —
“ Can He not look with pity too
“ On wretched Ellen Gray ? ”

Her eye was fix’d ; she said no more,
But propp’d against the cold street-door
She leaned her fainting head ;
One moment she look’d up and smil’d,
Full of new hope, as Mercy’s child,
— And the poor girl was dead.

THE AFRICAN DESERT.

SYNOPSIS.

By contemplating a guilty death-bed, the mind is brought to that state in which it can best picture the desolation of nature.— The desert.— Allusion to the fable of the cranes and pignies.— The contrast afforded by surrounding countries.— The omnipresent God.— Man regarded as an intruder on the wastes of nature.— Exemplified by the journey and fate of a caravan crossing the desert.— In detail.— An African sunrise.— Approach of the caravan.— Solitude.— The father and child.— Mirage.— The well in sight.— The simoom.— The stillness that succeeds.

Go, child of pity ! watch the sullen glare
That lights the haggard features of despair,
As upon dying guilt's distracted sight
Rise the black clouds of everlasting night ;
Drink in the fever'd eyeball's dismal ray,
And gaze again, — and turn not yet away,
Drink in its anguish, till thy heart and eye
Reel with the draught of that sad lethargy ;

Till gloom with chilling fears thy soul congeal,
And on thy bosom stamp her leaden seal,
Till Melancholy flaps her heavy wings
Above thy fancy's light imaginings,
And sorrow wraps thee in her sable shroud,
And terror in a gathering thunder-cloud !

Go, call up darkness from his dread abode,
Bid desolation fling her curse abroad,
— Then gaze around on nature ! — ah, how drear,
How widow-like she sits in sadness here :
Lost are the glowing tints, the softening shades,
Her sunny meadows, and her greenwood glades ;
No grateful flow'r has gemm'd its mother-earth,
Rejoicing in the blessedness of birth ;
No blithesome lark has wak'd the drowsy day,
No sorrowing dew has wept themselves away :
Faded, — the smiles that dimpled in her vales ;
Scatter'd, the fragrance of the spicy gales
That dew'd her locks with odours, as they swept
The waving groves, or in the rose-bud slept !

Is this the desert ? this the blighted plain
Where silence holds her melancholy reign, —

Where foot of daring mortal scarce hath trod,
But all around is solitude — and God, —
And where the sandy¹ billows overwhelm
All but young Fancy's visionary realm,
In which, beneath the red moon's sickly glance,
Fantastic forms prolong the midnight dance,
And pigmy warriors,² marshall'd on the plains,
Shout high defiance to the invading cranes ?

Regions of sorrow, — darkly have ye frown'd
Amidst a sunny world of smiles around :
Luxurious Persia, bower'd in rosy bloom,
Breathes the sweet air of Araby's perfume,
And where Italian suns in glory shine
To the green olive clings the tendrill'd vine ;
In yon soft bosom of Iberia's vales
The orange-blossom scents the lingering gales,
That waft its sweets to where Madeira's plain
With emerald beauty gems the western main :

¹ " The sands roll onward in waves like those of a troubled sea." — Goldsmith's *Animated Nature*, Vol. I. p. 13.

² Some account of the Pigmies may be found in Philostratus. — *Icon*. II. c. 22.

The winds that o'er the rough Ægæan sweep,
Tamed into zephyrs, on its islands sleep,
And where rich Delta drinks the swelling Nile,
Auspicious Ceres spreads her golden smile.
But on Sahara ¹ death has set his throne,
And reigns in sullen majesty alone:
Unfurled on high above the desert-king
The red ² simoom spreads forth its fiery wing;
The spirits of the storm his bidding wait,
Gigantic shadows swell his awful state,
And circling furies hover round his head,
To crown with flames the tyrant of the dead!
The desert shrank beneath him, as he pass'd,
Borne on the burning pinions of the blast;
He breath'd, — and solitude sat pining there;
He spake, — and silence hush'd the listening air;
He frown'd, — and blighted nature scarce could fly
The lightning glances of her monarch's eye,
But where he look'd in withering fury down,
A dying desert knit its giant frown!

¹ Sahára, or Zara, the Great Desert of Africa.

² "That extreme redness in the air, a sure presage of the coming of the simoom." — Bruce, Vol. IV. p. 558.

Desolate wilds, — creation's barren grave,
Where dull as Lethe rolls the desert-wave,
How sparingly with warm existence rife
Have ye rejoic'd in love, or teem'd with life.
Can it then be in solitudes so drear,
That utter nothing has its dwelling here? —
Hence, — thought of darkness! — o'er the sandy flood
Broods the great Spirit of a present God:
He is, where other being may not be;
Space cannot bind Him, — nor infinity!
Deeper than thought has ever dared to stray,
Higher than fancy wing'd her wondering way,
Beyond the beaming of the furthest star,
Beyond the pilgrim-comet's distant car,
Beyond all worlds, and glorious suns unseen,
He is, and will be, and has ever been!
Nor less, — where the huge iceberg lifts its head,
Dim as a dream, from ocean's polar bed;
Or where in softer climes creation glows,
And Paphos blushes from its banks of rose,
Or where fierce suns the panting desert sear, —
He is, and was, and ever will be, HERE!

But would thy daring spirit, child of man,
The secret chambers of the desert scan,
Curtain'd with flames, and tenanted by death,
Fann'd by the tempest of Sirocco's breath?
With crested Azrael¹ shall a mortal strive,
Or breathe the gales of pestilence, and live?
O then, let avarice his hand refrain,
Nor tempt the billows of that fiery main,
Let patience, toil, and courage nobly dare
Far other deeds than fruitless labours there,
Let dauntless enterprize, with generous zeal,
Toil, not unlaurell'd, for her fellows' weal,
But be the howling wilderness untrod,
And trackless still, Sahara's barren flood.

Lo, from the streaming east, a blaze of light
Has swept to distant shores astonish'd night,
Darkness has snatch'd his spangled robe away,
And in full glory shines the new-born day;²
Rejoice, ye flowery vales, — ye verdant isles
With the glad sunbeams weave your rosy smiles,

¹ Azrael, the angel of death.

² A morning near the equator has no twilight.

The bridegroom of the earth looks down in love,
And blooms in freshened beauty from above ;
Ye waiting dews, leap to that warm embrace,
With fragrant incense bathe his blushing face,
Thou earth be robed in joy ! — But one sad plain
Exults not, smiles not, to the morn again :
Soon as the sun is all in glory drest
The conscious desert heaves¹ its troubled breast,
Like one, arous'd to ceaseless misery,
That, ever dying, strives once more — to die.
And can Sahara weep ? with sudden blaze
Deep in her bosom pierce the cruel rays,
But never thence one tributary stream
Shall soar aloft to quench the maddening beam :
Tearless in agony, fixt in grief, alone,
Pines the sad daughter of the torrid zone,
A rocky monument of anguish deep,
The Niobe of Nature cannot weep !
Yet from her bosom steams the sandy cloud,
And heavily waves above ; — a lurid shroud,

¹ “ The solar beams causing the dust of the desert (as they emphatically call it) to rise and float through the air.” — Pottinger's Travels to Beloochistan, p. 133.

Dense as the wing of sorrow, flapping o'er
The wither'd heart, that may not blossom more.

Faint o'er that burning desert, faint and slow,
Failing of limb, and pale with looks of woe,
Parch'd by the hot Siróc, and fiery ray,
The wearied kaffè¹ winds its toilsome way.
'Tis long, long since the panther bounded by,
And howl'd and gaz'd upon them wistfully;²
Long since the monarch lion from his lair
Arose, and thunder'd to the stagnant air:
No wandering ostrich with extended wing
Flaps o'er the sands, to seek the distant spring;
Bounding from rock³ to rock, with curious scan
No wild gazelle surveys the stranger, man;
Nor does the famish'd tiger's lengthening roar
Speak to the winds and wake the echoes more.

¹ The kaffè or caravan.

² These animals are mentioned as inhabiting the skirts of the desert, but not found in the interior, by Mungo Park, Vol. I. p. 142.

³ Buffon, Hist. Nat. Vol. VII. p. 248. — “ Une terre morte, &c., laquelle ne presente que des rochers debout ou renversés.”

But o'er these realms of sorrow, drear and vast,
In hollow dirges moans the desert blast,
Or breathing o'er the plain in smothered wrath
Howls to the skulls,¹ that whiten on the path.
And as with heavy tramp they toil along,
Is heard no more the cheering Arab song, —
No more the wild Bedouin's joyous shriek
With startling homage greets his wandering shiek,
Only the mutter'd curse, or whisper'd pray'r,
Or deep death-rattle wakes the sluggish air.

Behold one here, who till to-day has been
A father, and with bursting bosom seen
His last, his cherished one, whose waning eye
Smiled only resignation, droop and die !
Parch'd by the heat, those lips are curl'd and pale,
As rose-leaves withered in the northern gale ;
Her eye no more its silent love shall speak,
No flush of life shall mantle on her cheek ; —

¹ Skeletons in the desert, Denham and Clapperton, Vol. I. pp. 130, 131, also Buffon in the passage above quoted. — “ Une terre morte, et pour ainsi dire échorchée par les vents, laquelle ne presente que, &c. — des ossements.”

Yet with a frenzied fondness to his child
The father clung, and thought his darling smil'd;
Ah, yes! 'tis death that o'er her beauty throws
That marble smile of deep and dread repose.

What thrilling shouts are these that rend the sky,
Whence is the joy that lights the sunken eye?
On, on, they speed their burning thirst to slake
In the blue¹ waters of yon rippled lake, —
Or must they still those maddening pangs assuage
In the sand-billows of the false mirage?
Lo, the fair phantom, melting to the wind,
Leaves but the sting of baffled bliss behind.

Hope smiles again, as with instinctive haste²
The panting camels rush along the waste,
And snuff the grateful breeze, that sweeping by
Wafts its cool fragrance through the cloudless sky.

¹ For a description of the mirage, see Capt. Lyon's *Travels*, p. 347, and Burchardt's *Nubia*, p. 193. — "Its colour is of the purest azure."

² The rush of a caravan to a stream in the desert, is well described in Buckingham's *Mesopotamia*, Vol. II. p. 8.

Swift as the steed that feels the slacken'd rein
And flies impetuous o'er the sounding plain,
Eager as bursting from an Alpine source
The winter torrent in its headlong course,
Still hasting on, the wearied band behold
— The green oasis, an emerald couch'd in gold !
And now the curving rivulet they descry,
That bow of hope upon a stormy sky, ¹
Now ranging its luxuriant banks of green
In silent rapture gaze upon the scene :
His graceful arms the palm was waving there
Caught in the tall acacia's tangled hair,
While in festoons across his branches slung
The gay kossóm its scarlet tassels hung ;
The flowering colocynth had studded round
Jewels of promise o'er the joyful ground,
And where the smile of day burst on the stream,
The trembling waters glitter'd in the beam.

¹ Bruce's Travels, Vol. IV. p. 559. — "The simoom — I saw from the S. E. a haze come, in colour like the purple part of a rainbow, &c., a kind of blush upon the air, a meteor, or purple haze."

It comes, the blast of death ! that sudden glare
 Tinges with purple hues the stagnant air ;
 Fearful in silence, o'er the heaving strand
 Sweeps¹ the wild gale, and licks the curling sand,
 While o'er the vast Sahara from afar
 Rushes the tempest in his wingéd car :
 Swift from their bed the flame-like billows rise,
 Whirling and surging to the copper skies,
 As when Briareus lifts his hundred arms,
 Grasps at high heav'n, and fills it with alarms ;
 In eddying chaos madly mixt on high
 Gigantic pillars dance² along the sky,
 Or stalk in awful slowness through the gloom,
 Or track the coursers of the dread simoom,

¹ στροβίλοι δὲ κόβιν εἰλίσσουσι—Æsch. Prom. V. 1091.

² Bruce, (as above.) "We were here at once surprised and terrified by a sight surely one of the most magnificent in the world. In that vast expanse of desert from W. to N. W. of us we saw a number of prodigious pillars of sand, at times moving with great celerity, at others stalking on with a majestic slowness; at intervals we thought they were coming in a few minutes to overwhelm us, &c. Sometimes they were broken near the middle, as if struck with a huge cannon-shot." See also Goldsmith's An. Nat. Vol. I. p. 363.

Or clashing in mid air, to ruin hurl'd,
Fall as the fragments of a shatter'd world!

Hush'd is the tempest, — desolate the plain,
Still'd are the billows of that troublous main;
As if the voice of death had check'd the storm,
Each sandy wave retains its sculptured form:
And all is silence, — save the distant blast
That howl'd, and mock'd the desert as it pass'd;
And all is solitude, — for where are they,
That o'er Sahara wound their toilsome way?
Ask of the heav'ns above, that smile serene,
Ask that burnt spot, no more of lovely green,
Ask of the whirlwind in its purple cloud,
The desert is their grave, the sand their shroud.¹

¹ Denham and Clapp. I. 16. "The overpowering effect of a sudden sand-wind, when near the close of the desert, often destroys a whole kafilā (caravan) already weakened by fatigue, &c." — and p. 63 — "The winds scorch as they pass; and bring with them billows of sand, rolling along in masses frightfully suffocating, which sometimes swallow up whole caravans and armies."

THE SUTTEES.

SYNOPSIS.

The natural beauty of Hindoostan contrasted with its moral depravity. — Approach of a funeral procession. — Hymn of the Brahmins. — The widow. — Her early history. — The scene of the funeral pile. — Enthusiastic feelings of the victim. — The pile is fired. — Address to British benevolence in behalf of the benighted Hindoos.

O GOLDEN shores, primeval home of man,
 How glorious is thy dwelling, Hindoostan!
 Thine are these smiling vallies, bright with bloom,
 Wild woods, and sandal-groves, that breathe perfume,
 Thine, these fair skies, — where morn's returning ray
 Has swept the starry robe of night away,¹
 And gilt each dome, and minaret, and tow'r,
 Gemm'd every stream, and tinted every flow'r.
 But dark the spirit within thee; — from old time
 Still o'er thee rolls the whelming flood of crime,

¹ Æsch. Prom. V. 24. ποικιλείμων νόξ, and Orph. Argon. 1026, ἀστρεχίτων νόξ.

Still o'er thee broods the curse of guiltless blood,
That shouts for vengeance from thy reeking sod;
Deep-flowing Ganges in his rushy bed
Moans a sad requiem for his children dead,
And, wafted frequent on the passing gale,
Rises the orphan's sigh, — the widow's wail.

Hark, 'tis the rolling of the funeral drum,
The white-robed Brahmins see, they come, they
 come,
Bringing, with frantic-shouts, and torch, and trump,
And mingled signs of melancholy pomp,
That livid corpse, borne solemnly on high —
And yon faint trembling victim, doom'd to die.

Still, as with measur'd step they move along,
With fiercer joy they weave the mystic song:
Eswara,¹ crown'd with forests, thee they praise,
Birmha, to thee the full-ton'd chorus raise;

¹ Eswara, goddess of Nature. Surya, the sun. Varuna, a water-nymph. Peris, or spirits of a certain grade, are excluded from paradise, from a gate of which Ganges flows. Kali, goddess of murder. Aglys, god of fire. Paváneh, of wind. See Maurice's Indian Antiq.

To ocean, — where the loose sail mariners furl,
And seek in coral caves the virgin pearl;
And to the source of Ganga's sacred streams,
Bright with the gold of Surya's morning beams,
Where on her lotus-throne Varuna sings,
And weeping Peris lave their azure wings:
They shout to Kali, of the red right hand,
Bid Aglys toss on high the kindled brand,
And far from Himalaya's frozen steep,
In whirlwind-car bid dark Pavánah sweep:
They chant of one, whom Azrael waits to guide
O'er the black gulf of death's unfathom'd tide;
Of her, whose spotless life to Seeva giv'n,
Bursts for her lord the golden gates of heav'n,
Of her, — who thus in dreadful triumph led,
Dares the unhallowed bridal of the dead!

And there in silent fear she stands alone,
The desolate, unpitied, widow'd one:
Too deeply taught in life's sad tale of grief,
In the calm house of death she hopes relief,
For few the pleasures India's daughter knows,
A child of sorrow, nursed in want and woes.

Curst from the womb, how oft a mother's fear
In silence o'er thee dropt the bitter tear,
Lest a stern sire to Ganga's holy wave
Should madly consecrate the life he gave :
Cradled on superstition's sable wing
In joyless gloom passed childhood's early spring,
And still, as budded fair thy youthful mind,
None bade thee seek, none taught thee, truth to find ;
Poor child ! that never raised the suppliant pray'r,
Nor look'd to heav'n and saw a Father there,
Untutor'd by religion's gentle sway
To love, believe, be happy, and obey.
Betroth'd in artless infancy to one
Thy warm affections never beam'd upon,
How shouldst thou smile, when ripe in beauty's pride
The haughty Rajah claim'd his destin'd bride ?
A trembling slave, and not the loving wife,
Pass'd the short summer of thy hapless life ;¹
And now to deck that bier, that pile to crown,²
His fiery sepulchre becomes — thine own.

¹ On the miserable state of woman in India, see Ward on Hindoostan, Letter VI. In p. 96 he says, "between eight and nine hundred widows, are burnt every year in the Presidency of Bengal alone ! 1818."

² Capt. Marr's Picture of India, p. 235.

And must it be, that in a spot so fair
Shall rise the madden'd shriek of wild despair?
This lovely spot, where glows in every part
The smile of nature on the pomp of art;
The banian spreads its hospitable shade,
The bright bird warbles in the leafy glade,
The matted palm, and wild anana's bloom,
The light pagoda, the majestic dome,
With emerald plains, and ocean's distant blue,
Cast their rich tints and shadows o'er the view.
But murder here must wash his bloody hand,
And superstition shake the flaming brand,
And terror cast around an eager eye
To look for one to save, — where none is nigh!
Far other incense than the breath of day
From that dark corpse must waft the soul away,
Far other moans than of the muffled drum
Herald the lingering spirit to its home:
Yes, — thou must perish; and that gentle frame
Must struggle frantic with the circling flame,
Constant in weal and woe, for death, for life,
The victim widow, as the victim wife.

Hoping, despairing, — friendless, and forlorn,
The death she may not fly, she strives to scorn :
Lists to the tale that bright-wing'd Peris wait
To waft her to Kalaisa's crystal gate,¹ —
Thinks how her car of fire shall speed along,
Hailed by high praises, and Kinnura's song, —
And upward gazing in a speechless trance,
Darts earnestly the keen ecstatic glance,
Till rapt imagination cleaves the sky,
And hope delusive points the way, — to die.
Who hath not felt, — in some celestial hour,
When fear's dark thunder-clouds have ceas'd to lour,
When angels beckon on the fluttering soul
To realms of bliss beyond her mortal goal,
When heavenly glories bursting on the sight,
The raptur'd spirit bathes in seas of light,
And soars aloft upon the seraph's wing, —
How boldly she can brave death's tyrant sting ?
Thus the poor girl's enthusiastic mind
Revels in hope of blessings undefin'd,
Roams o'er the flow'rs of earth, the joys of sense,
And frames her paradise of glory thence :

¹ Kalaisa, the Indian heaven. Kinnura, the heavenly singer.

For oft as memory's retrospective eye
Glanc'd at the blighted joys of days gone by,
How sadly sweet appear'd those smiling hours
When hope had strew'd life's thorny path with
 flow'rs,
How dark, and shadow'd o'er with fearful gloom,
The unimagined horrors of the tomb!
When she remembered all her joy and pain,
And in a moment liv'd her life again,
Each sorrow seem'd to smile, that frown'd before, —
Her cup of blessing *then* was running o'er, —
Days past in grief, beam'd now in hues of bliss,
Fancy gilt them, — but terror clouded this!
Yet swift her spirit, resolutely proud,
Scorn'd every hope, by mercy disallow'd:
The priests have long invoc'd their idol god,
The murd'rous pile, his altar, thirsts for blood, —
A horrid silence summons to the grave,
All wait for her, — and none stands forth to save,
O shall she tremble now, nor die the same, —
Shall she not fearless rush into the flame?
From her dark eye she strikes the rising tear,
And firmly mounts the pile — a widow's bier.

Instant, with furious zeal and willing hands,
Attendant Brahmins ply the ready brands ;
And as the flames are raging fierce and high,
And mount in rushing columns to the sky,
Lest those wild shrieks, or pity's soft appeal
Should rouse one hand to save, one heart to feel,¹
Madly exulting in their victim's doom
They heap with fiendish haste her fiery tomb, —
Clash the loud cymbals, wake the trumpet's note,
Roll the deep drum, and raise the deafening shout,
Till in dread discord through the startled air
Rise the mixt yells of triumph and despair !

Britain, whose pitying hand is stretch'd to save
From despot's iron chain the writhing slave ;
Where freedom's sons, at wild oppression's shriek,
Feel the hot tear bedew the manly cheek, —
Where the kind sympathies of social life
Sweeten the cup to one no more a wife,

¹ For a description of a Suttee, see Capt. Marr, as above, p. 243.

Where mis'ry never pray'd nor sigh'd in vain, —
Shall India's widow'd daughters bleed again?
Let wreaths more glorious deck Britannia's head
Than theirs, who fiercely fought, or nobly bled,
Wreaths such as happy spirits wear above,
Gemm'd with the tears of gratitude and love,
Where palm and olive, twin'd with almond bloom,
Tell of triumphant peace and mercy's rich perfume:
And ye, whose young and kindling hearts can feel
The prayer of pity fan the flame of zeal,
Trace the blest path illustrious Heber trod,
And lead the poor idolator to God!
Thus, in that happy land, where nature's voice
Sings at her toil, and bids the world rejoice,
No guiltless blood her paradise shall stain,
No demon rites her holy courts profane,
No howl of superstition rend the air,
No widow's cry, no orphan's tear, be there, —
India shall cast her idol gods away,
And bless the promise of undying day.

A CARMEN SÆCULARE FOR CHRISTIAN
ENGLAND.

ON THE PATTERN AND IN THE METRE OF THAT FOR
HEATHEN ROME BY HORACE.

HOLY Creator, ruler of the kingdoms,
Glory of earth and heaven, the Almighty,
Thou to be prais'd and worshipp'd never ceasing,
Hear us, Jehovah !

While as in days of innocence aforetime
We with the choral voice of supplication
Cry to the one great Spirit who beholds us,
Save, we beseech Thee !

May the bright sun, thy day-bestowing servant,
And at whose setting blushes modest even,
Still as he beams successive o'er the nations,
Favour old England :

Kindly may nature, providence approving,
Bless our homes with increase, and the matrons
Gently relieving, give us noble sons and
Virtuous daughters.

Rivet the golden links of happy wedlock,
And be the social sympathies unbroken,
While on her lord the wedded wife depending,
Smiles for him only.

Still against sect and heresy protesting,
Nursing her babes with motherly affection,
Loving to all, and tender, may the Church be
Faithful and holy :

And if Omniscience, never to be alter'd
In its decrees, be destiny presiding,
May Britain, by that destiny protected,
Prosper in greatness.

Pour on us kindly seasons, that abundant
Be the rich fruits of mother earth, and healthy
Still be the gales that waft us o'er the ocean
Conquerors ever !

Hear us, Redeemer, hear us, ever-blessed !
Hear, thou that dwellest infinite in splendour,
Hear, thou that always lovest to be gracious,
Rise and be with us !

If yet thou smilest favouring on England,
If yet the rose, the thistle, and the shamrock,
Form a sweet garland offer'd on thine altar,
Keep us united.

Let not the thief, or murderer infest us,
Let not the base incendiary be near us,
Let not the foul adulterer pollute us, —
Spare us from evil :

Bring up the youth in modesty and virtue,
Grant to old age tranquillity and wisdom,
Give the glad sons of Britain health and honour,
Greatness and plenty.

May British mercy more than British valor
Gain from the world its laurel and its olive,
Till over all her enemies triumphant
Glories Britannia !

Help her to rule her own rebellious children,
That the wide West may honour and uphold her,
Aid her to spread the banner of protection
Over her conquests :

Save from intestine murmurings and discord,
Criminal sloth, and infidel compliance,
Scatter the curse of national rejection
Brooding above us :

Let open faith, integrity, and firmness,
Primitive truth, and piety, and prudence,
Loyal content, and patriotic virtue,
Quickly returning,

Crown us with blessings, though we be unworthy,
Fill us with mercies forfeited, and rescue
From bitter hate and scorn among the Gentiles
Protestant Zion.

Friend of the needy, pity and relieve them :
Prosper our arts, and sciences, and commerce ;
All that can bless and beautify a nation,
Ever be Britain's !

Long as the world rejoices in thy favour,
Holding it up, Omnipotent, —let England,
Let Caledonia, with her sister Erin,
Queen of the nations,

Reign, and be strong, acknowledging thy mercy ;
Hear us in choral voice of supplication,
Who now invoke thy succour and thy blessing,
Father Almighty !

Yes, we accept the promise of thine answer,
Yes, we depend on pity for protection,
And upon God our confidence reposes,
Through the Redeemer.

CONCLUSION.

ALAS ! poor muse, thy songs are out of time,
 Thy lot hath fallen on an iron age,
 When unrelenting war the sordid wage
 Against thee, — counting it no venial crime
 To fling down in thy cause the champion's gage,
 And utterly scorning him, who dares to rhyme :
 O that thy thoughts had filled an earlier page,
 And won the favouring ears of holier men !
 Whose spirits might with thee have soar'd sublime
 Far above selfish Mammon's crowded den :
 Thou hadst been more at home, and happier then :
 Yet be thou of good courage ; there are still
 Those "left sev'n thousand," whose affections will
 Yearn on thy little good, and pardon thy much ill.









